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Edited by

Thomas Srampickal

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The Human Person: Focus of Ethics

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Editorial

“Human person is the only creature on earth that God has willed for its own sake” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, No. 1703). This conviction of the Church, repeatedly expressed in her various pronouncements, is also the foundation of her moral teachings. Being aware of the true dignity and value of the human person, she constantly speaks up for the protection of human rights. Evidently, it is not only the Church who is concerned about human rights. Individuals, groups, nations and governments are all interested in human rights, particularly in their own rights. They often vie with each other in loudly talking about rights and accusing each other of violating them. International meetings (e.g. UN conferences in Vienna, Cairo and Beijing) usually become platforms for the encounter of various interest-groups and their conflicts. Each group seems to harp on a set of rights which is of special interest to it, losing sight of other rights or other people's rights. Talk about and promotion of rights becomes meaningful and successful only if it is based on the dignity and value of the human person — of every human person, aiming at the integral human good.

This issue of *Jeevadhara* is an exploration of the focus and concern of ethics. It does this first by analysing the ethical theories of two outstanding philosophers — Aristotle and Kant — respectively by Dr. Lazar Kuttikatt and Dr. Alex Tharamangalam both of whom are professors in the department of philosophy at Paurasthya Vidyapitham. Rigorously philosophical, these articles trace and illumine the ethical tracks treaded by those two great minds underscoring the message that the good of the human person should be the goal of all our strivings because man is the “final end of creation”. Then Dr. Wilson Ukken, professor of Moral Theology at Paurasthya Vidyapitham, discusses the various factors and processes involved in the formation of the moral person, which is very important in a personalistic approach to morality. The last article, by this writer, is a reflection on certain themes of the encyclical *Evangelium Vitae*, which is a strong testimony to the dignity of the human person and the value of human life.

The Problem of Human Good: Aristotelian View

Aristotle's discussion on "good" opens with these words: "Every art (*technē*), every investigation (*methodos*), and similarly every action (*praxis*) and pursuit (*proairesis*), is thought to aim at some good. Hence, the Good has been rightly defined as that at which all things aim". According to Aristotle the base of human conduct is laid on what is conceived as good. He thinks that it is the knowledge of good that helps humans make right choices. The human of character makes the right choice, and thereby the good human becomes the measure of good. The human of character becomes the norm of good; the real good is what appears to be good to the good person. If so what is good? May this good be called its end? Aristotle defines 'good' in terms of 'end'. One aims at something good because it is good in itself. Good or *agathon* is the characteristic quality which is admirable in itself, making all things attractive and desirable in themselves. This good is the completion or perfection. This nature of supreme good (*ariston*) is something within itself, because it is something self-sufficient, and it is the end of all human actions. The supreme good does not depend on anything outside itself. That is why all things aim at this supreme good.

Introduction

The foundation of human conduct is laid on what is conceived as good. When some one does or says something, people ask themselves "is it right? or is it good?" Who can rightly say what is good and what is right? For Aristotle the base of human conduct is good. He thinks that it is the knowledge of good that helps humans make right choices. Who can have the right knowledge of good? or what is the measure of good? Can we say that every activity aims at some good? If so what is good? Can this good be called its end?

Everything in the world slowly actualizes its potentialities. To reach the fullness of its growth it needs a span of time and in between it fulfils different functions until it reaches its ultimate end, which is the supreme good. In that one accepts good which

all things aim at. Does Aristotle defines 'good' in terms of 'end'? Is he arguing that it is 'end' which forms 'good'? Is it not rather that he aims at something because it is good? We intend to discuss here the nature of the supreme good (*ariston*).

Basic concepts of good and end

Aristotle's ethical discourse on 'good' opens with these highly celebrated words: "Every art (*technē*), every investigation (*methodos*), and similarly every action (*praxis*) and pursuit (*proairesis*), is thought to aim at some good. Hence the Good has been rightly defined as that at which all things aim".¹

From the very beginning we must know thoroughly the connotations of the important Greek words which help us understand the concept of 'good'. The original Greek term *technē* can mean art, and the term *methodos* means knowledge that directs art-making.² Art deals with matters that can be changed by our own effort. It can be productive and practical. We have then the art of making and then applied science, the knowhow to produce things of art. In a way these two terms are like two sides of a coin. Therefore the art and its knowhow must stand together for its effective end. The effective end should be something good. Every art, somehow or other, is concerned with some good which is capable of improving the state of humankind.

Likewise there are two other terms *praxis* and *proairesis*: they mean action and choice³ respectively. They can be explained as the exterior action and its interior motivation. Here the involvement of the whole agent in his action is expressed.⁴ A person

1 NE, 1094a 1-3.

2 See C. Reeve, *Practices of Reason*, Oxford, 1992, p. 22. He understands this as practical investigation that aims not merely at theoretical knowledge but at personal change. He quotes Aristotle, "the purpose of our examination is not simply to know what virtue is, but to become good, since otherwise the enquiry would be of no benefit to us".

Cf. NE, 1103b 27-29; 1095a 5-6; 1099b 29-32; 1179a 34-b 31.

3 A few translate this as pursuit that means an act of chasing after something. The word choice is more correct and simpler.

4 See S. Broadie, *Ethics With Aristotle*, Oxford, 1991, p. 58. See also O. Balaban, 'Praxis and Poiesis, in Aristotle's Practical Philosophy', *Journal of Value Inquiry*, Vol. 24, 1990, pp. 185-198. F. Chiareghin, 'Vivere e Vivere Bene: Note Sul Concetto Aristotelico Di Praxis', *Revue de Metaphysique et de Morale*, Vol. 95, 1990, pp. 57-74.

may do good acts at times without any interior motivation. Aristotle says that it is possible to have good grammar even without knowing the rules of good grammar.⁵ A person does not become good unless he acts: 1) knowing what he does, 2) choosing acts for their own sake, 3) acting out of a firm and stable character.⁶ If the exterior action emerges from the right interior motivation, that act itself will be good and so also its end. Here the concept of good is taken into consideration in order to judge an act moral or immoral. If the act is morally good, it gives happiness to its agent. The end we act for is the well-being of the human. Aristotle says, "In actions that for the sake of which (the end we act for) is the first principle, as the hypotheses are in mathematics".⁷ One of the first principles or ends is *eudaimonia* (happiness) or well-being of the human.⁸

... but to us it is clear from what has been said that happiness is among the things that are prized and complete. It seems to be so also from the fact that it is a first principle; for it is for the sake of this that we all do everything else ...⁹

Therefore all our actions aim at some good and the best among goods is *eudaimonia* or the well-being of the human. The first two terms (*techne* and *methodos*) point to the world of techniques, the second two terms (*praxis* and *proairesis*) to the world of moral action. These two pairs are aiming at some good. Each element of each group has one particular good either external or internal. Since they are couples they act together for their determined good, the ultimate end.

Three more Greek words are introduced here for a better understanding of Aristotle's concept of good and end. These can be named as: "Aristotle's concept of *theōria*¹⁰ and the *energeia*-

5 Cf. NE, 1105a 18-25.

6 Cf. NE, 1105a 31-b 1.

7 Cf. NE, 1151a 16-17.

8 See C. Reeve, *Practices of Reason*, Oxford, 1992, p. 22.

9 NE, 1102a 1-3.

10 Aristotle uses this term as one of the more specifically characterized ultimate ends of human life, the intellectual 'activity', customarily translated as 'contemplation'. Aristotle describes the most significant of human *energeiai*.

*kinēsis*¹¹ distinction''.¹² The distinction between *energeia* and *kinēsis* is more important to his ethical thought. Aristotle takes *praxis* as a neutral term for both *kinesis* and *energeia*. The distinction between *kinesis* and *energeia* is basically as follows: the former is a motion directed towards an end (*telos*) outside itself while the latter is an activity which is its own end. The process of building a house would be a *kinesis* since the end of the process, i.e., the house which is finally built, is distinct from the process of building itself and even represents its termination. A motion attains its end only when it actually comes to an end. A *kinesis* is also something which occurs in time and is, as it were, stretched out in time. In the case of building a house, the foundation is laid before the walls and the walls before the roof. This shows the distinct parts of the overall time. The motion will not be equally complete. A motion will always be potential in regard to the actual object which is its end. Thus motion defined in *Physics* as: "the actuality of what exists potentially qua potential"¹³. In motion the potential is actualised in such a way as to retain its potentiality. For example, in the process of building, the buildable is actualized in such a way as to remain buildable, i.e., yet to be built.

Energeia lacks the kind of potentiality just described. Because *energeia* is its own end, it does not go the way of becoming something other than itself. It has already all the actuality and no activity will cause to lose this. Since nothing separates activity from its end it is in no way potential. An example of such an *energeia* is vision. The activity of seeing is a process which will ultimately attain no other end than itself. Our seeing and the object "being seen" represent one and the same activity. One

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- 11 Aristotle distinguishes between *energeia* and *Kinesis* in *Metaph*, 1047a 30-1047b 2. *Energeia* usually means 'activities', sometimes 'acts', or 'actualization'; *kinesis* means 'motions', 'processes', or 'changes'. See also R. Bargue, Adler, and D'Ursel, 'Aristotle's Definition of Motion and its Ontological Implications', *Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal*, Vol. 13, 1990, pp. 1-22.
- 12 M. White, 'Aristotle's Concept of *Theōria* and the *Energeia-Kinesis* Distinction', *Journal of History of Philosophy*, Vol. 18, 1980, p. 253. Here these Greek words are transliterated. See also A. Beavers, 'Motion, Mobility, and Method in Aristotle's *Physics*: Comments on *Physics* 2.1.192b 20-24', *The Review of Metaphysics*, Vol. 42, 1988, pp. 357-374.
- 13 *Ph*, 201a 10-11. *he tou dunamei ontōs entelecheia, he toiouton.*

cannot separate them as means and end. The activity of seeing has only itself as its end.

Kinēsis is always "directed to an end outside itself", so it cannot be an ultimate good for human life. Therefore the ultimate good for human life must be *energeia*, because it is perfect in itself.¹⁴ *Energeia*, however, is either an end or that sort of *praxis* in which the end is present or "inherent".¹⁵ In view of the central role of the *energeia-kinēsis* distinction in Aristotle's thought, it would be helpful to have a test of determining, in particular cases, whether a *praxis* is an *energeia* or a *kinēsis*. Aristotle's attempt was to seek the understanding of good in terms of end; because good is an end at which all things aim; because that end is the completion or perfection. Aristotle attributes some formal properties to the good, especially in the case of the human. This good should be an ultimate end. It must be the unique ultimate end of all our art, investigations, actions and choice, and it must be self-sufficient.¹⁶ These properties are formal in the sense that the good has them irrespective of content or composition. In the basic concept of good we conclude that the good must be something complete, perfect, self-sufficient and something good in itself.

Meaning of good

The good or *agathon* is the quality, making everything attractive and desirable in itself.¹⁷ *Agathon* implies that "the complete good is thought to be self-sufficient".¹⁸ First of all the linguistic usage of the word 'good' is to be understood. This helps us to recognize the exact philosophical issues with respect to the "good". The predominant usage of the word "good" (*agathos* and *bonus*) is as an adjective, but the English word, on which we

14 Cf. *NE*, 1094a 1-20.

15 Cf. *Metaph*, 1048b 22.

16 See G. Santas, 'Desire and Perfection in Aristotle's Theory of the Good', *Apeiron*, Vol. 22, 1989, p. 80.

17 Cf. *NE*, 1097b 1-7; "but honour, pleasure, reason, and every excellence we choose indeed for themselves ... but we choose them also for the sake of happiness, judging that through them we shall be happy. Happiness, on the other hand, no one chooses for the sake of these, nor, in general, for anything other than itself".

18 *NE*, 1097b 8. See J. Gill, 'An Abstract Definition of the Good', *Ethics*, Vol. 80, 1969, pp. 112-121.

will here concentrate, is used both as an adjective and as a substantive.¹⁹

The Oxford English Dictionary defines 'good' as: "The most general adjective of commendation, implying the existence of a high, or at least satisfactory, degree of characteristic qualities which are admirable in themselves or useful for some purpose".²⁰ Some points can be developed from this: 1) the generality of this word; 2) other commendations too; 3) certain "characteristic qualities"; 4) the qualities rather relatively, comparatively, in degree; and 5) the qualities are admirable either (a) in themselves, or (b) as useful for some purpose. Here its philosophical importance is expressed by its generality. But where does exactly that generality lie? For us it becomes a question. Does it pertain to the factor of 'commendation', or to the 'qualities'? It might be both. We cannot deny the relevance of commendation and qualities. The commendation comes because of the qualities.

The term 'good' also carries the connotation of the qualities in question being of 'worth', i. e., they are 'worthy of commendation'. That is to say, it is the qualities which, by their 'worth', elicit the commendation. The word 'worth' means 'having a specified value', in a generalised sense of "the relative value of a thing in respect of its qualities or of the estimation in which it is held".²¹

Highly relevant here is the word 'value' a synonym of the word 'worth'. Its special significance is because of the prominence of this word in philosophical discussions of the 'good'.²² The noun 'value' is derived from the old French '*valu*', past participle

19 See for details J. Ackrill, 'Aristotle on 'Good' and the Categories', *Articles on Aristotle: Ethics and Politics*, Ed. J. Barnes, M. Schofield and R. Sorabji, London, 1977, pp. 17-24.

20 *Oxford English Dictionary*, Prepared by J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner, Oxford, 1989, 'Good'. See E. La Croce, 'Good and Goods According to Aristotle', *New Scholastic*, Vol. 63, 1989, pp. 1-17.

21 *Oxford English Dictionary*, 'Worth'.

22 The nature of moral value assumes two fundamentally different forms depending on whether the notion of right or the notion of good is thought to be more basic. These two views are historically distinct: the priority of the good was central to Greek Ethics, whereas the modern ethics has turned upon the priority of right. See C. Larmore, 'The Right and the Good', *Philosophia*, Vol. 20, 1990, pp. 15-32.

of *valoir* (from the latin *valere* 'to be strong') meaning 'to be strong', 'to be of worth'. In its earliest usage in English it meant the amount of some commodity, medium of exchange, which renders it of worth. Thus the word 'value', like 'worth', and 'good', also entails its connotation of 'relative' or 'comparative'. This is signified too in the word which has in the last hundred years come into use as the name for the 'general theory of value', 'axiology' from the Greek *'axios'* — "weighing as much, of like value, worth as much as, hence generally, worth, worthy".²³

The word 'value' is used both as a noun and as a verb; and the word 'worth' also as a noun and as an adjective; and 'good' primarily as an adjective, and sometimes as a substantive. So this word 'good' has the peculiarity that when the adjective is used substantively, it becomes absolute, while the other two terms have the connotation of their being as relative and comparative, that means, they are not used in an absolute sense. Leclerc affirms this concept: "Instance of the absolute use is that in which the singular adjective is used with the meaning of "that which is good (in various senses), e. g., he became a power for good, for the good of humankind".²⁴ Another instance of this kind would be "pleasure is good".²⁵ This could mean that pleasure is a good thing (attribute, condition etc.). But 'good' could be meant here as a noun. It would mean that pleasure is 'a good', one among others. It could also mean that pleasure is 'the good', without conditions. It is to be noted that this absolute meaning of the noun 'good' is not captured by the nouns 'value' and 'worth'. Leclerc comes to the conclusion:

One could meaningfully say, pleasure is "a value", but not that pleasure is "the value", or "the worth", for the words "value" and "worth", are relative and comparative, by contrast

23 *A Greek English Lexicon*, Prepd. Liddle, Scott, and Jones, Oxford, 1940 '*axios*'.

24 I. Leclerc, 'The Metaphysics of the Good', *Review of Metaphysics*, Vol. 35, 1981-82, p. 5.

25 Subjectivists, who agree that goodness is dependent upon persons for existence, hold views of two sorts: (1) good is partially dependent upon persons as (a) anything desired or "any object of any interest" (R. B. Perry), and (b) "a quality of any object of any interest" causing it to be desired (A. K. Rogers); (2) good is completely dependent upon persons as (a) satisfaction of any desire or any interest in any object (DeW. H. Parker), and (b) pleasant feeling (Hedonism). *Dictionary of Philosophy*, Ed., D. Runes, Totowa, 1984, 'Good'.

with "good" in the sense under consideration, which is absolute.²⁶

The qualities commended as 'good' are to be distinguished as commendable, either in themselves or as useful for some purpose. This distinction is referred to in philosophical discourse, respectively as 'intrinsic' and 'instrumental'.²⁷ It is this consideration which more particularly brings us to the philosophical issue in respect of 'good'.

Aristotle's approach was to seek the understanding of 'good' in terms of 'end' (*telos*). He held that 'good', in the most general sense, is "that at which all things aim".²⁸ It is true that for Aristotle *telos*, 'end', is a cause, but it is a cause in the sense of "that for the sake of which"²⁹ by contrast with the platonic cause as the 'formal cause'.

Meaning of end

The end or *telos* is the completion or perfection of something. So, terms 'good' and 'end' go together. Aristotle presents both concepts of good and end in his *Metaphysics* in the concept of perfection. The good is desirable not only because it pleases us, but also, and in the first place, because it has value of its own, because it is complete.

'Perfect' or 'complete' is not taken in an absolute sense, but in a relative sense with regard to good things. Perfection of something means its having all its parts;³⁰ things and persons functioning

26 I. Leclerc, 'The Metaphysics of the Good', *Review of Metaphysics*, p. 5.

27 "It may be thought that, in his (Aristotle's) opinion, our decision-making should be sensitive to this difference between goods that are desirable in themselves and those that are not: the fact that good is intrinsically good should give it greater weight than it would have if it were desirable only as means. Since a purely instrumental good is one that is desirable only to the extent that it promotes something else, an intrinsic good must be one that has some value beyond any instrumental worth it may have". See R. Kraut, *Aristotle on the Human Good*, New Jersey, 1989, p. 162.

28 *NE*, 1094a 3.

29 In book I of *NE* Aristotle is looking for an end for the sake of which every other end is pursued—and this "for the sake of" is to be understood in normative—causal terms. Happiness is the good that is causally promoted by every other end, and that provides a standard for the regulation of every other end. See R. Kraut, *Aristotle on the Human Good*, p. 13.

30 Cf. *Metaph*, 1021b 12–14. See also D. Devereux, 'Comments on Good as Goal by Nicholas P. White', *Southern Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 27, 1988, pp. 195–207.

in their own particular excellence, such as physician or flute player; things or persons arriving at the end of their development and so becoming fulfilled. Aristotle argues: "The things which have attained a good end are called complete; for things are complete in virtue of having attained their end".³¹ Aristotle says, for example, the perfection of the human's life does not consist primarily in the practice of virtues but in the possession of happiness after which the virtuous life strives.

The two first mentioned perfections, completeness of parts and excellence in functions, refer to the physical good. Mothersill explains:

Excellence of whatever kind affects that of which it is the excellence in two ways. (1) It produces a good state in it. (2) It enables it to perform its function well. Take eye-sight. The goodness of your eye is not only that which makes your eye good, it is also that which makes it function well. Or take the case of a horse. The goodness of a horse makes him a good horse, but it also makes him good at running, carrying a rider, and facing the enemy.³²

The third one, with which humans are concerned in reaching the end of their lives, refers to the ethical or moral good. Ontological goodness, we may add, consists in actuality of the existence and power of being. Hutchinson explains the concept 'perfect' basing it on the *Physics* of Aristotle:

1. If a thing has acquired its excellence, then it is most natural.
2. If a thing is most natural, then it is perfect.
3. So, if a thing has acquired its excellence, then it is perfect.³³ The good as end, completion or perfection is the Aristotelian concept of good.

We call complete (1) that outside which it is not possible to find even one of the parts proper to it; e. g. the complete time of each thing is that outside which it is not possible to find any time which is a part proper to it. (2) That which in respect of excellence and goodness cannot be excelled in its kind, e. g., a doctor is complete or a flute player is complete,

31 *Metaph*, 1021b 22-25. 32. M. Mothersill, *Ethics*, New York, 1965, p. 96.

33 D. Hutchinson, *The Virtues of Aristotle*, London, 1986, p. 21.

when they lack nothing in respect of their proper kind of excellence.³⁴

Goals or ends are the leading principles, rules and laws in moral affairs; as a result, these ends are freely and consciously sought by humans.

These ends will be argued from the standpoint of a metaphysics of 'act'. In a metaphysical conception of all beings in 'acting', every being stands in need of an 'end', a *telos*, since 'acting' entails an 'end' toward which the acting is aimed or directed. Now the end of an agent is, logically, not generable by the agent in question, since to be an 'agent acting' presupposes an 'end'. For Aristotle, there is a metaphysical necessity for a transcendental teleological principle. And to Aristotle, it was very sure that there is a necessary connection between 'end' and 'good'. This is so because 'end' entails "that for the sake of which". That is, the 'end' entails 'that on account of which', or 'wherefore', or 'the reason for which', the acting is done, and this 'reason' must be that the end be in some respect 'good'. This 'good', however, cannot be a purely 'instrumental' one, and to escape an infinite regress we necessarily must come to a 'good in itself' or 'intrinsic good'.³⁵ Thus we have Aristotle's general position that "the good is that at which all things aim"³⁶, since 'the good' is "that for the sake of which as an end".³⁷

Now Aristotle held that the conception of 'good itself' as self-subsistent or as a universal must be the supreme, complete or perfect 'good'.³⁸ He, then, argued that this end is to be identified with the divine unmoved mover as the teleological cause, i. e., as the teleological principle. Aristotle maintained the position that God is a thinker whose "thinking is thinking on thinking"³⁹, and argued that the actuality of thought is life,⁴⁰ and God's self-

34 *Metaph.* 1021b 12-16. 35 Cf. *NE*, 1094a 19-23. 36 *NE*, 1094a 3.

37 *EE*, 1218b 11. "This then would be the good *per se*, the end of all human action".

38 Cf. *NE*, 1094a 22. See B. Williams, 'Aristotle on the Good: A Formal Sketch', *Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 12, 1962, pp. 289-296.

39 *Metaph.* 1074b 35. *estin he noesis noeseos noesis*.

40 Cf. *Metaph.* 1072b 28-29, *energeia de he kath'auten ekeinou zoe ariste kai aidios*.

consistent actuality is life most good and eternal,⁴¹ and therefore "God is a living being, eternal, most good".⁴²

The point in this argument which is of special relevance to us here is that it is because God is the Highest or Supreme Good⁴³ that God is the teleological principle, the principle of ends. In other words, God provides the end for all things by being that at which all things aim, and that he is this by his being the highest good.

The problem now is how the "principle of good" is to be comprehended. We can, I would suggest, most readily approach this problem from a consideration of 'end'. The 'end' for a being means that at which its acting aims, and this aim implies some 'order'. Why is an order needed? The order implied in the nature of a being is constituted to attain its natural end. What is implied is not merely some order or other, i. e., any order, but an order which is 'fitting', 'suitable', 'appropriate' for that being. Further, the end, the order, which is aimed at, is of some definiteness as a possibility for its actualization. That is to say the 'principle of end' entails that it be also the 'principle of good'.

But the 'principle of good' cannot be, as Aristotle has maintained, the 'highest Good'. This is a fundamental presupposition for any actuality, because it is a fundamental presupposition for the possibility to have any relevance to actuality. Thus the transcendent 'principle' of 'good', which is also the 'teleological principle', is an ultimate metaphysical necessity.⁴⁴

What are the right and good ends, those properly expected from the good people in so far as they exercise their actions? We may answer with Aristotle, for example, the just person gives other

41 Cf. *Metaph.* 1072b 28-29.

42 *Metaph.* 1072b 29-30, *ton theon einai zoon aidion ariston.*

43 Here I do not say that God is the criterion of good, but on the other hand I stress that God is the Supreme End, the end of human activity. See T. Mayberry, 'Standards and Criteria: Can God Be the Standard of the Good', *Mind*, Vol. 81, 1972, pp. 87-91.

44 Whitehead, I think, had a grasp of this in his doctrine of God as the "principle of creation" having a "primordial valuation of pure potentials (whereby) each eternal object has a definitive relevance to each concrescent process". See A. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, New York, 1969, (part 2, chapter 1, section 1), pp. 52-55.

people their due⁴⁵ and the brave person faces life-threatening dangers for an important cause.⁴⁶ If people think they are giving other people their due when in fact they are not, are they still doing what is properly expected of a good person? Irwin says: "It is natural (and highly Aristotelian in spirit) to say that in one sense they are, and in another they are not".⁴⁷ Here is used the terminology of 'subjective', which means the agent thinks that he applies and of 'objective', which means he actually applies to the action'.⁴⁸

There are degrees in the series of goods, such as: useful goods, pleasant goods and noble goods. The useful goods and pleasant goods vary according to the view of the agent. The useful and pleasant are morally good only in so far as they lead to the noble good, the moral good. The useful and the pleasant, detached from their direction to the noble good, are constant temptations for deviation from life goals. There is a need for constant, wilful and conscious striving after the noble ends of human life. In this striving we find a real growth towards the perfection of good.

The distinction between 'Haplös' and 'Tini'

Aristotle says that the good is ambiguous between what is good *haplös* and what is good *tini*.⁴⁹ The good *haplös* and the good *tini* are such as are distinguishable at the universal and the particular context. We know that there is good such as good for every one and is such conditionally only for a few. In some of the same contexts, he also draws the related contrasts between *to agathon* and *to phainomenon agathon*, the good and the apparent good⁵⁰. How can we distinguish good without qualification? In drawing both distinctions Aristotle makes the morally virtuous

45 Cf. *NE*, 1132b 14-21; 1131b 19-20.

46 Cf. *EE*, 1229a 3-5.

47 T. Irwin, 'Virtue, Praise and Success: Stoic Response to Aristotle', *Monist*, Vol. 73, 1990, p. 61. See also M. Wedin, 'Aristotle on the Good for Man', *Mind*, Vol. 90, 1981, pp. 243-262.

48 These terms have become common in the discussions of 'subjective' and 'objective' rightness. See H. Prichard, *Moral Obligation*, Oxford, 1949, p. 28. See also W. Ross, *Foundations of Ethics*, Oxford, 1939, p. 148.

49 Cf. *NE*, 1152b 27. The translation of W. D. Ross: "since that which is good may be in either of two senses (one thing good simply and another good for a particular person)".

50 Cf. *EE*, 1236a 10, 1227a 22, 1235b 26ff; Cf. *NE*, 1113a 16, 1114a 32.

person's experience decisive: what appears good to him is good, what is good for him or from his point of view is good without qualification and by nature. Gottlieb comments:

In Aristotle's ethical work, this characterisation of what is *haplōs* good holds in the case of the virtues and the good action. These are *haplōs* good in that they are good for any human being, no matter what condition that human being is in.⁵¹

Aristotle argues: "the good subject to fortune and which the unjust person tries to grab are *haplōs* always good but are not always good *tini* for an individual in a particular state".⁵² He continues that honour, wealth and so on are natural goods in spite of the fact that they are harmful *tini*.⁵³

For neither the foolish nor the unjust nor the intemperate would get any good from the employment of them, any more than an invalid from the food of a healthy man, or one weak and maimed from the equipment of one in health and sound in all limbs.⁵⁴

It means that there are two sorts of good (1) which are good for human beings at any time and in any condition: *haplōs*; and (2) which are good for any one in the absence of countervailing conditions such as illness or vice.⁵⁵ Aristotle recognises these two sorts of good as distinct. The former are good and praise-worthy, the latter (strength, honour, birth, wealth and power) are good but are not praise-worthy.⁵⁶

According to Aristotle, *haplōs* reflects a distinction which exists in the world, independently of any human conventions: The *haplōs* good is good not by convention, but good by nature.⁵⁷

51 P. Gottlieb, 'Aristotle and Protagoras: The Good Human Being as the Measure of Goods', *Apeiron*, Vol. 24, 1991, p. 34.

52 *NE*, 1129b 3. 53. Cf. *EE*, 1237a 4-5, the natural goods are good *haplos*

54 *EE*, 1248b 31-34.

55 Cf. *MM*, 1183b 39-1184a 4. But 'good' admits of another division, to wit, some goods are everywhere and absolutely desirable, and some are not. For instance, justice and other excellences are everywhere and absolutely desirable, but strength and wealth, and power, and the like are not so everywhere nor absolutely. 56. Cf. *EE*, 1248b 24-26

57 See J. Cooper, *Reason and Human Good in Aristotle*, p. 127, and A. Kenny, *The Aristotelian Ethics*, Oxford, 1978, p. 65, also treats the *haplos* goods and the natural goods as the same.

"For by nature that which is absolutely good is good to him."⁵⁸ Aristotle argues again, "a good man, then, is one for whom the natural good is good".⁵⁹ Aristotle continues: "If we look deeper into the nature of things, a virtuous friend seems to be naturally desirable for the virtuous man. For that which is good by nature, we have said, is for the virtuous man good and pleasant in itself".⁶⁰ In the hands of a good person, then, the use of the natural good is good. Since it is the mark of the good person to act virtuously, he will often use his natural good to help others too. By contrast, a bad person, who uses the same good incorrectly, will not only be doing himself harm in making worse his bad character, but will not be doing anyone else any good either. Cooper is also of the same opinion:

By contrast with nonvirtuous, then, the virtuous person would have the character which provides him with the best possible set of desires and interest, in the sense that the good things he will (or can expect to) achieve in life constitute the greatest sum of good possible for a human being.⁶¹

In the good person's hand, then the natural good such as wealth, power, intellect and office are not good exclusively for himself. Similarly, the virtues, which benefit the good person who exhibits them, also will bring good to others.

An important point which Aristotle makes about the *haplos* good is that we should desire not for the *haplos* good but that the *haplos* good should be good for us.⁶² That means that each person should desire to be in the state in which such good would be good for him. Paula Gottlieb comments:

This suggests that even if there were no good people around, the natural good would not cease to be naturally good for human beings. They would still be good for which it would be worth an individual getting into the state in which they

58 EE, 1237a 4. P. Gottlieb writes this as "by nature things *haplos* good are good for a human being" in 'Aristotle and Protagoras: The Good Human Being as the Measure of Goods', p. 37.

59 EE, 1248b 25-26.

60 NE, 1170a 13-15.

61 J. Cooper, *Reason and Human Good in Aristotle*, pp. 131-132.

62 Cf. NE, 1129b 47.

were good for him. In this sense they would still be really good.⁶³

It is clear that Aristotle prefers to be in the condition of the *haplos* good. In his *Politics* Aristotle explains that the punishments are good *ex hypotheseos* and not *haplos*. He meant that these things were only good on the assumption that there will be some bad people in the state. It would be better if such measures were not needed at all.⁶⁴

Aristotle's account of the development of good, therefore, goes beyond any other version of the concept of good. In short according to Aristotle's plan what is good *haplos* is not good *haplos* simply because it appears good to the good person, but what is good *haplos* seems good to the good person precisely because it really is good for a human being. The reality of this fact is detected rightly by the presence of the good character of a good person.

Good man and character

Aristotle says: "Each state of character has its own ideas of the noble and the pleasant, and perhaps the good man differs from others most by seeing the truth in each class of things, being as it were the norm and measure of them".⁶⁵ Aristotle's point is not that fine and pleasant things are constituted by someone's character alone, but, rather, that whether or not they seem fine and pleasant to a person is a function of that person's character. To decide if a thing is good or bad does not depend solely on an individual's character. If that were the case, the person in a bad condition would be right about what is good and fine. However, according to Aristotle, a bad person may be wrong about what is good without qualification, and he may be wrong about what is good for himself.

According to Aristotle, the good person has the correct view of good, not because his character constitutes what is good, but because having the right sort of character is a necessary condition for having the appropriate sensitivities and cognitive ability to detect what is really good. Aristotle himself makes it clear:

63 P. Gottlieb, "Aristotle and Protagoras: The Good Human being as the Measure of Goods", *Apeiron*, p. 38.

64 Cf. *Pol.* 1332a 11-16.

65. *NE*, 1113a 31

And this eye of the soul acquires its formed state not without the aid of excellence as has been said and is plain; for inferences which deal with the acts to be done are things which involve a starting point, viz. 'since the end, i. e., what is best, is of such and such nature', whatever it may be ... this is not evident except to the good man; for wickedness perverts us and causes us to be deceived about the starting point of action.⁶⁶

Aristotle is of this opinion that our characters are responsible for how things appear to us. If they are bad or defective, they prevent us from developing the cognitive ability to detect the truth. In that case, they make things appear differently from how they really are.

For the same thing never appears sweet to some and bitter to other, unless in the one case the sense-organ which discriminates the aforesaid flavours has been perverted and injured. And if this is so the one party must be taken to be the measure, and the other must not. And I say the same of good and bad, and beautiful and ugly, and all other such qualities.⁶⁷

Aristotle often points out that the good person's use of certain goods⁶⁸ makes them good for himself and for others. These goods are good for the good human because he uses them in the right way, while he has a certain good character. The good person's character never affects adversely the good of the other person and the common good of human beings, even if it affects negatively the personal material benefits of the good person in the eyes of common humans. Things are good for the good person not simply because he thinks they are good, or because of their, inherent goodness, in as much as apparent to him. Nor are they good for him simply because he has a certain character. He must also make use of them in a particular way. Action, not mere thinking, is essential.

66 *NE*, 1144a 29–36.

67. *Metaph*, 1063a 1–6

68 'The virtues are examples of things commended since praise accompanies the deed they inspire. Other goods, again, are potentialities; as authority, riches, strength and beauty; for these the good man has the power to make good use, and the bad man the power to make evil use. Hence goods of this kind are termed "potentialities". Such potentialities are undoubtedly good things (since in each case the touch stone is the use made of them by the good man and not by the bad) ...' *MM*, 1183b 27–31.

Unqualified goods are really good for the good person, for all human beings, regardless of the good person's opinion. If a good person changes his mind about these goods, this would show that his character has deteriorated and not that the unqualified good has changed.⁶⁹ The good person always experiences happiness and he seeks for perfect happiness, the ultimate end, in all the moments of his life. In this search we now pass through the hierarchy of ends that orient us to the theoretical life or contemplation.

Hierarchy of ends

All ends of human activity are to be ordered in a systematic manner that leads human life to its ultimate end which is happiness. Kraut says: "An important ingredient of this interpretation is that every good of human life is to be located somewhere within a hierarchy that has a single end at its pinnacle".⁷⁰ Aristotle uses examples from the world of techniques (arts and applied sciences) to the subordination of one to another and of their ends to one another. He uses the arts to illustrate moral action and its means-ends subordination. In the first place, all arts have ends beyond their activity: medicine's end is health, and military science's end is victory, "in all these the ends of the master arts are to be preferred to all the subordinate ends".⁷¹

How does the same single good result in all human activity? Prior explains:

How can a single good be found which is the object of all human endeavour, and thus a suitable end for ethics? Aristotle solves this problem by noting that some activities and their ends are subordinated to others.⁷²

Furthermore there is a hierarchical subordination among arts and applied sciences: some are higher, some lower, and the latter serve the higher. Finally each art has several auxiliary arts subordinated to the master art. Strategy, for instance, uses the skill of horsemen, archers, and sailors in order to win the victory.

69 It is clear that Aristotle's 'measure doctrine' is far from the Protagorean doctrine or any other theory of good.

70 R. Kraut. *Aristotle on the Human Good*, p. 5.

71. *NE*, 1094a 14-15.

72 W. Prior, *Virtue and Knowledge*, p. 149.

So, what we were trying to formulate is that, though there are multiple ends, they are hierarchically ordered, so that there should be single, ultimate good if there is a single science at the top of the hierarchical pyramid. Aristotle believes that there is such a master science in the realm of action, and that it is politics.⁷³ But here one can be happy only in a secondary sense, because according to Aristotle perfect happiness consists only in contemplation. Kraut is of this opinion:

Aristotle's fuller meaning is this: perfect happiness consists in exercising theoretical wisdom (the most perfect virtue), while a less than perfect happiness consists in exercising the practical virtues (the ones that are not most perfect).⁷⁴

Here is a problem for Aristotle: which life should one choose to live as his ultimate end — philosophical or political life. If Aristotle had failed to compare the two kinds of life and to say which is more perfect, his treatment of happiness would have been radically incomplete.⁷⁵ But it is true that the good human can choose rightly basing his choice on the norm of the good human as the measure of good.

The good human as the measure of good

In the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle argues that the excellent person (*ho spoudaios*) is the measure of what is good, fine, pleasant, honourable and so on. Aristotle introduces his own 'measure' doctrine:

The man of good character judges every situation rightly; i. e., in every situation what appears to him is the truth... and probably what makes the man of good character stand out furthest is the fact that he sees the truth in every kind of situation: he is a sort of standard and yardstick of what is fine and pleasant.⁷⁶

Here there may be some influence of Protagoras' famous doctrine that the human is the measure of all things.⁷⁷ Aristotle draws an analogy between good, perceptual qualities and healthy things.

73 Cf. *NE*, 1094a 28.

74 R. Kraut, *Aristotle on the Human Good*, p. 198.

75 Cf. R. Kraut, *Aristotle on the Human Good*, p. 198.

76 *NE*, 1113a 30-33.

77 I do not mean that Aristotle's view is that of Protagoras. There is an explicit difference and growth in this concept of measure. Protagoras says that each

It can be no accident that the qualities which Aristotle mentions in drawing his analogies are precisely the ones which Plato brings up when discussing Protagoras' view.⁷⁸

The object of wish of a good human is really good.⁷⁹ Aristotle says: "The good man is he for whom, because he is excellent, the things that are absolutely good are good; it is also plain that his use of these goods must be excellent and in the absolute sense good".⁸⁰ If the use of the things of an excellent man is good, then surely the wish of the same person will also be good. There are two views about the object of wish: one, that the object of wish is good, the second, that the object of wish is apparent good.⁸¹ The first view, according to Aristotle, has the paradoxical consequence that when someone wishes for it if he chooses incorrectly, then it is not an object of wish. Aristotle says:

Now those who say that the good is the object of wish must admit in consequence that which the man who does not choose aright wishes for is not an object of wish (for if it is to be so, it must also be good; but it was, if it so happened, bad).⁸²

Aristotle's argument is very compressed, but the missing premises can be supplied as follows. In the first view Aristotle assumes that things are really good (or bad) independently of what anyone thinks of them and that what anyone wishes for is what is really good. Since what is really good does not depend on what people think, it is possible for someone to wish for something which he thinks is good but which turns out to be bad. However, if it is possible for someone to wish for something that is not really good, then it is possible to wish for something which is not really an object of wish.

According to Aristotle, each person wishes for what is good to him, what appears to him good, but that does not mean that each person is necessarily right about what is good. Aristotle claims that the real good is what appears to be good to the good person. The excellent person sees what is true, being a sort of

individual is the measure, on the other hand Aristotle argues that only the good person is the measure.

78 Cf. Plato, *Theaetetus*, 151d-183.

79. Cf. *NE*, 1113a 23-24.

80 *Pol*, 1332a 21-25.

81. Cf. *NE*, 1113a 15-16.

82 *NE*, 1113a 16-20.

standard and measure.⁸⁴ These standards for human conduct for all members of society are offered by political science.

Politics: Science of Supreme Good

It is political science that studies the ultimate good of the human.⁸⁵ Politics is the most outstanding practical science of human conduct; it offers human conditions for a self-sufficing life, a civilised existence for well-conducted lives in the frame work of the city-state. All arts, such as strategy, domestic economy and oratory, ultimately aim at the good human life in the city-state. Their master science is politics because its ends are subordinated to the highest end, the good of the human. Let us see the view of Aristotle:

This end must be the good for man. For even if the end is the same for a single man and a state, that of the state seems at all events something greater and more complete both to attain and to preserve; for though it is worth-while to attain the end merely for one man, it is finer and more godlike to attain it for a nation or for city-states. These, then, are the ends at which our enquiry, being concerned with politics, aims.⁸⁶

Prior explains it:

Modern readers find it strange that Aristotle should begin a work on ethics with the claim that politics, rather than ethics, is the master practical science. Aristotle, though, like most Greeks, thinks that politics and the ethics have the same end, "the good for man"; politics is superior to ethics only because it is a "greater and perfect thing ... nobler and more divine" (1094b 8-10) to secure and maintain the good life for an entire state than for a single individual.⁸⁷

Politics may be taken in two senses: either the art of governing the city-state, and this seems to be the text's meaning, or the practical science that sets laws, norms and rules of human conduct. As such, human politics guides humans to happiness, to good human life; therefore it is political ethics. What ethics does to the individual by pointing to his supreme goal of life, does politics to

84 Cf. *NE*, 1113a 29-31.

85 Cf. *NE*, 1094b 5-12.

86. *NE*, 1094b 6-12.

87 W. Prior, *Virtue and Knowledge*, p. 149.

all individuals, to the society, to the city-state. "Political science legislates as to what we are to do and what we are to abstain from".⁸⁸ Such politics is political ethics. Since politics gives the moral law support by making it a law for all to follow, politics is the supreme practical science, an architectonic science, to which all others are subordinated in achieving the fullness of human good in the city-state. Having established that there is a master practical science, Aristotle points to a single ultimate end which is the supreme good of all human activity.

Various seekers of the Supreme Good

Who will be the best seeker of the Supreme Good? There are no different opinions about the Good. It is happiness, according to both ordinary and cultured people. But the difference of opinion arises, when it comes to asking what happiness consists in? Generally happiness is felt by the common people and the wise. Aristotle explains:

The former thinks it is some plain and obvious thing, like pleasure or honour or money, and there are various other views; and often the same person changes his opinion: when he falls ill he says that it is health, and when he is hard up he says that it is money. Conscious of their own ignorance, they admire those who proclaim some great thing that is above their comprehension. Now some thought that apart from these many goods there is another which is good in itself and causes the goodness of all these as well.⁸⁹

In order to realize the good in itself which causes the goodness of all good things we shall examine the more prevalent opinions among the common people that seem to have some reason in their favour.

Pleasure stimulates, accompanies, and rewards activity and achievements. Pleasure has a legitimate place in human life but tends to something else, to activity and, therefore, pleasure cannot be the highest good of the human. Kraut agrees with Aristotle in that the life of pleasure is fit only for cattle.⁹⁰ Aristotle says:

Indeed pleasure is thought to be not good for these two reasons ... that some of them are activities belonging to a bad

⁸⁸ NE, 1094b 5-6.

⁸⁹ NE, 1095a 21-28.

⁹⁰ See R. Kraut, *Ethics With Aristotle*, p. 24.

nature... those of bad men; while others are meant to cure defective nature, and it is better to be in a healthy state than to be getting into it, but these arise during the process of being made complete and are therefore only incidentally good.⁹¹

In the opinion of Prior:

Aristotle understands by 'the life of pleasure', not any life filled with pleasant experience, for he thinks the good life is pleasant in that sense, but rather, a life devoted to the pursuit of the pleasures of eating, drinking and sex. Such a life is in fact suitable to cattle, according to Aristotle's account of the soul.⁹²

Living the life of pleasure requires the use of the nutritive, reproductive, sensitive and probably the imaginative faculties, but not reason. Thus it may be worthy of lower animals, but is beneath human dignity.

Aristotle asserts: 'People of superior refinement and of active disposition identify happiness with honour, for this is, roughly speaking, the end of political life'.⁹³ Honour, as the end of political life, is superior to pleasure at least in that it can only be pursued by human beings. But honour is defective as an end: ...for honour seems to depend on those who confer it rather than on him who receives it, whereas our guess is that the good is a man's own possession which cannot easily be taken away from him. Furthermore men seem to pursue honour to assure themselves of their own worth; at any rate, they seek to be honoured by sensible men and by those who know them, and they want to be honoured on the basis of their virtue or excellence.⁹⁴

Honour is a recognition of virtue or excellence in the honoured. Honour cannot be the Supreme Good, and still less can it be the highest good of the human. Virtue, then, is better than honour. But virtue cannot be happiness. It lacks something more because virtue is a disposition not an activity, and therefore it is consistent with extreme misfortune.⁹⁵

91 NE, 1154a 31-b 2.

93 NE, 1095b 22-23.

95 See M. Hollis, 'Reasons of Honour', *Aristotelian Society*, Vol. 87, 1986-87, pp. 1-19.

92. W. Prior, *Virtue and Knowledge*, p. 150.

94. NE, 1095b 24-29.

Almost as an afterthought, Aristotle adds to his list of good the life of wealth, which he soon dismisses in a sentence: "clearly, wealth is not the good which we are trying to find, for it is only useful, i. e., it is a means to something else".⁹⁶ It is surely one of the most remarkable features of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, that Aristotle feels the need to devote no more space than this to the view of the good most common in the developed world today. Kraut comments thus: "The lowest row of this hierarchy contains ends (such as wealth) that are not good in themselves, but are desirable only on condition that they lead to further goods".⁹⁷ Wealth is a means to the acquisition of things that might, we hope, make us happy. Money, in particular, is a means for buying means of sustenance for the body and education for the soul. Since all the above mentioned goods, and the list is by no means exhaustive, are means to further goals, they cannot be the good of the human and even less his highest good. At the same time such actions of virtue, honour, and wealth are not simply irrational, but they fall short of the Supreme Good.

After having seen these various opinions about good or the various seekers for good life and finding them all wanting, Aristotle gives his own account of the good. What is good for the human? "Human good turns out to be the activity of the soul in conformity with excellence, and if there are more than one excellence, in conformity with the best and most complete",⁹⁸ it must be the good of human life: something that is in itself completely satisfying or an activity humans desire for its own sake.⁹⁹ Happiness fits this description.¹⁰⁰ But what is happiness? "Happiness, we claim, is an end and something in every way final".¹⁰¹ The happiness of a happy person logically depends on his having a happy life. This is the abstract quality of being happy. Again, happiness can also indicate something concrete, for example, greetings for a wedded pair. But it must necessarily follow that in every kind of happiness it

96 *NE*, 1096a 6–8. 97. R. Kraut, *Aristotle on the Human Good*, p. 5.

98 *NE*, 1098a 16–20.

99 See M. Hester, 'Aristotle on the Function of Man in Relation to Eudaimonia' *History of Philosophy Quarterly*, p. 6. See J. Oughertu, Ed., *The Good Life and its Pursuit*, New York, 1984.

100 Aristotle gives two distinct and seemingly irreconcilable versions of the human's *eudaimonia* in the *NE*.

101 *NE*, 1101a 18.

must contain the abstract quality of happiness which all particular happy lives have in common. That abstract quality is the source or principle whereby the happy life and the happy person are happy.¹⁰² This can be explained only through the characteristic activity (*ergon*) of the human.

Ergon argument

Aristotle suggests that the human function consists in fulfilling our special function (*ergon*).¹⁰³ He says that the human function is with an "activity of soul in accordance with virtue and if there are more than one virtue in accordance with the best and most perfect".¹⁰⁴ The orientation of this argument goes for the foundation of the philosophical life and the political life. The function argument needs critical discussion.¹⁰⁵

If we consider what the human function is, we find that there is something in common, i. e. common to all plants, animals and humans; and something that is peculiar to the human alone, distinct from that of plants and animals. Aristotle's explanation is based on the concept of a peculiarly human 'function'.

If we take a flutist or a sculptor or any artist or in general any class of men who have a specific function or activity his goodness and proficiency is considered to lie in the performance of that function; and the same will be true of man,

102 See S. Broadie, *Ethics With Aristotle*, p. 27.

103 See A. Adkins, 'Connection Between Aristotle's *Ethics* and *Politics*', *Political Theory*, Vol. 12, 1984, pp. 34-37.

104 *NE*, 1098a 16-18. See J. Nelson, 'Was Aristotle a Functionalist?', *Review of Metaphysics*, Vol. 43, 1990, pp. 791-802.

105 See P. Glassen, 'A Fallacy in Aristotle's Argument About the Good', *Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 7, 1957, pp. 319-322.

See M. Nussbaum, *Aristotle's De Motu Animalium*, pp. 100-106.

See C. Korsgaard, 'Aristotle on Function and Virtue', *History of Philosophy Quarterly*, Vol. 3, 1986, pp. 259-279.

See S. Clark, *Aristotle's Man: Speculations Upon Aristotelian Anthropology*, Oxford, 1975, pp. 14-27.

See F. Siegler, 'Reason, Happiness and Goodness', *In Aristotle's Ethics: Issues and Interpretations*, Ed. James J. Walsh and Henry L. Shapiro, Wadsworth, Belmont, 1967, pp. 30-46.

See also B. Suits, 'Aristotle on the Function of man: Fallacies, Heresies, and Other Entertainments', *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 4, 1974, pp. 23-40.

assuming that man has a function. But is it likely that whereas joiners and shoe-makers have certain functions or activities, man as such has none, but has been left by nature a functionless being?¹⁰⁶

Aristotle begins with the idea that the good in a specialised realm, for example: the good of a flutist or of a sculptor, consists in fulfilling a certain function. The same should hold true of human beings in general: if we have a function, then our good consists in doing whatever our function does.¹⁰⁷ Human good is not *any* activity of the soul that conforms to virtue, for eating is an activity that can conform to the virtue of temperance, but it is an activity of the lowest faculty of the soul, the nutritive faculty.¹⁰⁸ For the same reason the human peculiarity cannot be sensation because we have this in common with the ox and every animal.¹⁰⁹ Aristotle comes now to something peculiar to the human: "certain active *praktike*¹¹⁰ life of the part having reason".¹¹¹ What Aristotle is looking for in seeking the *ergon* of human beings is the sort of activity they characteristically engage in.

The function argument is 1) Every species has a unique essence, which is its function.¹¹² 2) The good of each species is just doing well its function.¹¹³ 3) The essence of the human is activity in accordance with reason. Thus the good of the human is such activities, and *eudaimonia* is uniquely human pleasure which is a by-product of one or several of these activities.¹¹⁴

Aristotle indeed thinks that there is a characteristically human activity specially for the human.

106 NE, 1097b 25-30.

107 Cf. NE, 1097b 24-28.

108. Cf. NE, 1097b 34-1908a 1.

109 Cf. NE, 1098a 1-3.

110 See J. A. Stewart, *Notes on the Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle*, Vol. 1 & 2, Oxford, 1982.

We see a contrary view to this in Joachim. See H. Joachim, *Aristotle, The Nicomachean Ethics*, Oxford, 1951, p. 50.

111 NE, 1098a 3-4.

112 The biological definition of the species is what Aristotle is calling its function (to *ergon*).

113 This concept is made easy for Aristotle by the extensive attachment of "eu" to nouns, adverbs and adjectives in Greek.

114 See M. Hester, 'Aristotle on the Function of Man in Relation to the *Eudaimonia*', *History of Philosophy Quarterly*, p. 5.

What can this function possibly be? simply living? He shares that even with plants, *but we are now looking for something peculiar to man*. Accordingly, the life of nutrition and growth must be excluded. Next in line there is the life of sense perception. But this, too, man has in common with the horse, the ox, and every animal. There remains then an active life of the rational element.¹¹⁵

This passage contains perhaps the most crucial argument in all of Aristotle's function argument.¹¹⁶ If the distinctively human life is the life of reason, then the good life will be that in which reason is exercised well, as it would be by 'a man of high standards'; 'a function is well performed when it is performed in accordance with excellence appropriate to it'.¹¹⁷ Kraut is of this opinion that our function consists in contemplation (or more fully, that contemplation perfectly fulfils our function, and ethical activity fulfils our function to a secondary degree).¹¹⁸ From Aristotle's official definition of *eudaimonia*, the ultimate end of man follows: "the good of man is an activity of the soul in accordance with the virtue, and if there are more than one virtue, in accordance with the best and most perfect".¹¹⁹ Human good consists in the activity of the highest faculty of the soul, which we have seen is reason. The excellence or virtue which is "the best and most complete" is the excellence of the rational faculty.

We should not misunderstand: Aristotle's position of the peculiarity of man, different from plants and animals, is only one among other necessary features of our ultimate end. By the words of Williams an objection can be raised to this position of Aristotle's peculiarity of human act.

115 NE, 1097b 33-1098a 4. See R. Kraut, 'Peculiar Function of Human Beings', *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 9, 1979, pp. 467-478.

116 See E. Linden, 'Can Animals Think?', *Time International*, Vol. 141, No. 13, 1993, p. 55. Here is a problem: if animals can think, what is the peculiar function of the human.

Kenny seems to think, for a reason which is not clear to me, that the EE more legitimately speaks of the function of the soul instead of the function of the human, and he notes the similarity between the function argument in the EE and Plato in the *Republic* 352e-354a on the function of the soul.

See A. Kenny, *The Aristotelian Ethics*, Oxford, 1978, p. 203.

117 NE, 1098a 14-15.

118 See R. Kraut, *Aristotle on the Human Good*, p. 313.

119 NE, 1098a 15-17.

If one approached without preconceptions the question of finding characteristics which differentiate men from other animals, one could as well, on these principles, end up with a morality which exhorted men to spend as much time as possible in making fire; or developing peculiarly human physical characteristics; or having sexual intercourse without regard to season; or despoiling the environment and upsetting the balance of nature; or killing things for fun.¹²⁰

The peculiarity of an activity according to Aristotle is not a sufficient condition to decide on the ultimate end of human life. If it is the sole element that decides the ultimate end of the human, then the argument of Aristotle is insufficient. Aristotle's argument does not need any further clarification than that "anything we can do that no other animal can do is a plausible candidate for the human good".¹²¹ Reeve reminds strongly: "The specialness of the human function derives from the specialness of the human essence to which it is identical but neither the function nor the essence is determined by what is special".¹²² Here Reeve closes the gap on the open criticism of the function argument. Thus the good life is not that in which we eat, reproduce, sense, move, remember, or imagine well, but that in which we exercise reason well. Aristotle is not assuming that whatever is special to a human being is his function. Prior argues:

The conclusion that the good human life is that in which we reason well does in fact follow from the premise that the human *ergon* is rational activity and the premise that something is a good thing of its kind if it performs the *ergon* of that kind of thing well.¹²³

Hutchinson says: "The activity on which Aristotle settles as the human's *ergon* is not one activity among others; it is a form of activity which, because it includes others, characterizes human life as a whole".¹²⁴ From this we would be able to understand what is the good and peculiar function of the human or to his/her good life.

120 B. Williams, *Morality: An Introduction to Ethics*, New York, 1972, p. 64.

121 R. Kraut, *Aristotle on the Human Good*, p. 318.

122 C. Reeve, *Practices of Reason*, p. 126.

123 W. Prior, *Virtue and Knowledge*, p. 154.

124 D. Hutchinson, *The Virtues of Aristotle*, p. 62.

According to Aristotle the qualification of this good life must be evaluated in a "complete life" rather than over a brief period. Aristotle goes on to say that all of these opinions contain truth and he claims that the happy life, as he describes it, contains all including, notably, pleasure and external goods. So the good life,¹²⁵ as long as the human has modest good fortune, will indeed be in his best interests, for it will contain the goods which he needs for what he cares about, namely good and noble activities. The good life is in the human's interests in a more direct sense, too, for such will love his life and be pleased with himself. Aristotle says:

... the more a man is possessed of virtue in its entirety and the happier he is, the more he will be pained at the thought of death, for life is best worth living for such a man. and he knows that he is losing the greatest goods, and this is painful.¹²⁵

So the life recommended by Aristotle as the best for humans to lead will indeed be intrinsically attractive and it will subsume all the goods which matter to him who lives it. Such a way of life will, by itself, "make life desirable and lacking nothing".¹²⁶ We think that the argument by which he arrives at this conclusion is that the life desirable for the human is either philosophical or political life.

The highest Good for the human

The world of techniques is now being applied to moral action; in both cases there is a subordination of means-ends. Aristotle, however, presses his analysis of means-ends subordination to the point where there must be some ultimate intrinsically¹²⁷ desirable end of human life. If there be no such end, our desire would go on *ad infinitum*, pursuing an indefinitely receding object, so that "our desire would be empty and vain".¹²⁸ Such aimless desire or action must terminate in its object or in its end.

We have seen that all human endeavour aims at an end, but in order to reach one's end one must use means. The real significance of means cannot be discovered except in terms of the ends

125 NE, 1117b 10-12.

126. NE, 1097b 15.

127 It is claimed, we can determine whether something is intrinsically good by ascertaining if it is prized for its own sake or wanted in itself. See G. Wright, *The Varieties of Goodness*, London, 1963, pp. 100-103.

128 NE, 1094a 21.

at which they aim. Thus, all immediate and intermediate ends receive their meaning from the supreme end of human action and life, the end in itself, the best, most continuous, most pleasant, most self-sufficient, most free and leisurely activity, and especially loved for its own sake, which does not admit of further activity.¹²⁹

The whole meaning of end consists in the attractive good it offers to the agent. Both the immediate and intermediate ends aim at further ends, which owe their attraction to the one end that is the highest goal of human striving. Since all ends receive their goodness and consequently their attraction from their last one, there must be a last end — the supreme source of goodness and its attraction — initiating every other subordinate end in a series of meaningfully connected ends or there would be no series at all.¹³⁰ If there is no last, there could also be no first. Since it is impossible to string out infinitely a series of ends and means, there must be a supreme end of human conduct and life.

Aristotle seems unwarranted to infer, that the ultimate end of all human actions must be the same.¹³¹ The greatest good for the human is said by Aristotle to be appealing to people, and that good is an end for the sake of which every other end is pursued. That is the point of saying that happiness is the perfect good. "Happiness then, is something complete and self-sufficient, and is the end of action".¹³² For happiness, being the final end of all that people pursue, does appeal to people. Happiness appeals to the person because it is the union and harmony of all the projects and concerns which matter to him. Hutchinson explains the same theme of Aristotle:

129 *NE*, 1177a 18b–26, in summarizing Aristotle's argument I have substituted the lesser claim for the one Aristotle actually makes. But it is highly significant that Aristotle should here overstate his case (and repeat the point at *NE*, 1177b 18). For if my interpretation of the contemplative life is correct the stronger claim would seem to be correct, provided that the contemplative attitude is taken as the norm: the human bent on contemplation as his ideal does not love anything for its own sake except *theōria*.

See J. Moline, 'Contemplation and the Human Good', *Nous*, Vol. 17, 1983, pp. 37–53.

130 Cf. R. Kraut, *Aristotle on the Human Good*, p. 13.

131 See W. Ross, *Aristotle*, London, 1923, p. 188.

132 *NE*, 1097b 20. This reference of the first book in Aristotle's ethics is compatible with the statement of book X that contemplation is the most self-sufficient good (1177a 27f.)

And Aristotle's happiness, the good life in his term, will appeal in the same way, because it will be the union and harmony of all the projects and the concerns which matter to the good man. It will be a life worth living for the man who lives it, which is not to say that it will appeal to other people, who may be depraved, corrupted, impetuous, irrational, or deficient in some other respect.¹³³

Aristotle himself makes it attractive:

The features that are sought for as attractive in happiness seem, all of them, to belong to what we have defined happiness as being. For some identify happiness with virtue, some with practical wisdom, others with a kind of philosophical wisdom, others with these, or one of these, accompanied by pleasure, while others include also external prosperity.¹³⁴

Since all men desire happiness, happiness is the supreme good for the human, however, not all agree about the nature of happiness. They lead basically one of three lives: pleasure, moral virtue and contemplation. Among the virtues themselves there is a hierarchical order: some are perfect and some are most perfect. Kraut explains:

Some virtues of the rational soul are not perfect, because they are desirable only on condition that they lead to other virtues; others are perfect but not most perfect because, although they are choiceworthy in themselves, they are also desirable for the sake of some further virtue. And in X. 7-8, we learn that the most perfect virtue is the one that enables us to engage in our highest activity, contemplation.¹³⁵

According to Aristotle, happiness (*eudaimonia*) is to be attained by engaging in the activity of God. The more thorough the investigation into the nature of God the greater insight will be had into *eudaimonia*. Miller gives a distinct picture of the Prime Mover according to the book Lambda of the *Metaph*:

He is (PM1 = Prime Mover 1) primary and first cause, i. e., the first mover, the cause of all; (PM2) immovable, unchangeable, although he is the first mover; (PM3) separable, (a) in so far as he is substance as opposed to attributes or motions and

133 D. Hutchinson, *The Virtue of Aristotle*, p. 70.

134. *NE*, 1098b 22-26.

135 R. Kraut, *Aristotle on the Human Good*, p. 13.

also (b) in that he is separate from sensible things, thus purely formal and simple in nature; further he is (PM4) eternal, indestructible; (PM5) he is an actuality; (PM6) living; his activity (with which, as actual, he is identified) is (PM7) (a) contemplation and (b) of the highest and the best object, which is (c) himself; and this activity is (PM8) the most pleasant. And (PM9) the motion which the unmoved mover causes is circular, the primary type of change and this is the motion of the first Heaven.¹³⁶

Here we can see a great resemblance with the characteristics of human good that is *eudaimonia*; especially in the contemplative life is it best exemplified. Miller expounds on this:

But he (Aristotle) also makes two other claims: that moral virtue makes one happy in a secondary sense; and that contemplation or what is best, is god-like, divine — in fact, the activity of God.¹³⁷

Now we come to the point that the criterion for the highest good is derived from the characteristics of God, the Prime Mover, which is the standard of the good and a good human person.

Conclusion

As we have understood, in the Aristotelian concept of the good the two ethical terms 'good' and 'end' are to be taken together. The good or *agathon* is the characteristic quality which is admirable in itself, making all things attractive and desirable in themselves. Aristotle's attempt was to seek an understanding of good in terms of end; because good is an end at which all things aim; and it is the completion or perfection.

Everything has its function to fulfil or to actualize and the fulfilment of this function is its proper end. With regard to the human, his/her thrust for self actualization is not merely an unconscious impulse, rather it is a conscious and free effort. Human function is not one activity among all human endeavour, it is a form of activity which, because it includes others, characterizes

136 D. Miller, 'Moral Virtue, Eudaimonia, and The Prime Mover', *The New Scholastic*, Vol. 60, 1986, pp. 5–6.

137 D. Miller, 'Moral Virtue, Eudaimonia and The Prime Mover', *The New Scholastic*, p. 1.

human life as a whole. The good human of character becomes the norm of the good; the real good is what appears to be good to the good person. All human endeavours and ends are hierarchically ordered to an ultimate end which comes under a master science called politics. We have seen that happiness or contemplation is the perfect good for all. It is something self-sufficient and perfect, and it is the end of all human actions. This good is supreme because it is complete in itself. The nature of this supreme good does not depend on anything outside itself. That is why all things aim at this good.

We know that Aristotle believed the good life to be that in which we reason well. We should live in order to reason well; and to reason well is to exercise the virtues of the thinking part of the soul. All of our desires, and all of our external resources, should be regulated in such a way that they contribute fully to this ideal, as it is expressed either in the philosophical life or, failing that, in the political life. This life is the best good and the ultimate good.

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Person and Morality

The importance of the person in moral decision-making is the focal point of this article. Vatican II some 30 years ago stated that "the institutions, laws and modes of thinking and feeling as handed down from previous generations do not always seem to be well adapted to the contemporary state of affairs".¹ It called for a Bible-based and person-oriented renewal of moral theology. This article draws upon the writings of James M. Gustafson who stresses the importance of "turning to the person" in moral discourse.

I. From Acts to Person

The subject of human morality is person.² The person has to act freely and responsibly. We notice a shift of emphasis from the act-oriented morality to an agent-oriented morality. A "turn to the subject" perspective is gaining momentum in Christian moral thinking. The act-oriented morality emphasizes principles, the agent-oriented morality emphasizes the qualities of the person.

The moral life of a Christian is to be dynamic; it is not simply a passive adherence to a set of laws and principles. It is rather a free, responsible and creative response to the work of God. He should discern God's action. This demands a shift of emphasis from norms to the person, the subject of action who is called to live his Christian vocation.³

The shift of emphasis to the subject of action rather than to the action itself in no way belittles the importance of norms and principles which guide human action. Instead the emphasis is on the need of a responsible moral action. Man should act, not behave.

Man is to be responsible to God, to oneself and to others. Freedom and openness are the necessary conditions for responsible

1 GS 7.

2. OT 16.

3 Cf. J. M. Gustafson, *Theology and Christian Ethics*, Philadelphia: Pilgrim Press, 1970, p. 27. Gustafson explains that his perspective is to the person rather than to the norm.

action. This means giving a conscious direction to one's life. The responsibility should be *assumed* freely and thoughtfully by the agent instead of ascribing it from outside.⁴

Biblical morality focusses on the personal dimension. Bible reveals a relation between God and the human which is personal. That God revealed in the person of Christ should be the center of Christian Ethics. According to Gustafson the principle, the norm, the center, and the goal of Christian moral theology is Christ.

The human is a "creative and responsible participant in the ongoing development of history and even nature".⁵ If he is to be creative and responsible, he should be formed.

Formation of the person

The sort of person one has become influences one's actions.⁶ Hence, the becoming or formation of person is very important in moral action. It does not minimize in any manner the importance of the objectivity which gives direction to one's choice of action.

Personal responsibility is the sign of a mature moral action. We have to consider moral action rather than acts. Action is dynamic, acts are not. Moral actions are based on and directed by serious and sincere convictions and intentions. Everyone is personally responsible and obedient to a Person, and not to a code or an ethical principle. It is to the living God who continues his redeeming work in history that the human is personally responsible. How is one to be responsible and act morally? This question takes us to the theme of discernment.⁷

4 Cf. Wilson Ukken, *Turn to the Subject: A Study of the Formation of the Christian Moral Person in the Writings of James M. Gustafson*, Kottayam: OIRSI, 1981. This is part of the doctoral Dissertation. In this the author expounds the views of Gustafson on the formation of moral person. This article is an exposition of Gustafson's main ideas on the importance and the formation of the moral person in Christian moral thinking.

5 J. M. Gustafson, "What is the contemporary Problematic of Ethics in Christianity? *Central conference of American Rabbis Journal*, XV, No. 1 (Jan. 1968): p. 65

6 J. M. Gustafson, *Can Ethics Be Christian?* Chicago: The University Press, 1975, p. 29.

7 Gustafson develops these ideas in several places. The important sources are: *Christian Ethics and the Community*, Philadelphia: Pilgrim Press, 1971; *Theology and Christian Ethics*, Op. cit.; *The Church as Moral Decision-Maker*, Philadelphia: Pilgrim Press, 1970.

Discernment

What is discernment?⁸ It is a quality of perception, of discrimination, of observation and of judgement. Negatively, it is not having a schema for analysis, nor is it a formulation of first principles. An emotional reaction is also not discernment. Positively it is a *perception*. It involves first a reading of the actual situation from a *perspective*. Perspectives differ; so also readings. Second, the histories of the person influence the reading. Third, persons are governed by beliefs, rules, moral principles ... All these factors influence human discernment.

As far as Christians are concerned their faith conditions their discernment. The inner transformation of a Christian of which Paul speaks in Romans (12: 1-2) ought to enable them to discern the will of God and to know what is good, acceptable, and perfect. The Christian perspective which is informed by belief, guided by moral rules and principles, influences a Christian's process of reading and interpreting the situation in which he is to make moral decisions. The decision-making of a Christian moral person is influenced by the community in which he lives and also by the community of the past. He should maintain relationship with the community of the past to act in the present.

II. Becoming a Christian

This analysis takes the following stages. First, we analyze the various factors which influence the becoming of a person. Second, we see how faith in Christ influences a person's 'becoming' and how he relates with the world. How and to what extent does the world influence a person's moral action?

Person in relationships⁹

Moral life can be viewed in terms of action and interaction. Any moral activity takes place within relationships, between persons and others. The other could be another person, an institution, a law, a course of events etc. The relationships are mutual, creating obligation and claim. The mutual relation and interaction pave the way for responses, changes, reform etc. It enables change of ourselves, of others, and of the form of relationship between them.

8 Gustafson discusses this in the book *Theology and Christian Ethics*.

9 This is developed in the book *Can Ethics be Christian*, *op. cit.*

These might change as a result of actions and interactions. What is the basis for the change? The answer is the action and the change effected are partly caused by the sort of person one is. This question takes us to the next consideration, namely the factors that constitute or condition the *sort of person one is*.

Many factors enter into the becoming of the person. These factors — biological, psychological, socio-cultural, religious and so on — are the necessary *given* of a person's becoming. A person can choose them or dissent or minimize their influence in his personal and social development.

a) *Biological factor*

The genotype of a person is determined at the moment of conception and it determines the individual also — his physical and intellectual capacities, his susceptibilities to certain physical and mental diseases etc. A person's interaction with his physical, social, and cultural environments is dependent on his genotype. The person has only a limited control over these.

b) *Psychological factor*

What is the influence of "unconscious motives" of a person on that person's actions? Authors differ in their views on this influence. While some rule out any serious influence, Gustafson admits some sort of influence. He makes the assumption only indirectly. Today some mental conditions are seen to be causing some immoral actions. Similarly they can also influence morally good actions!

c) *Socio-cultural factors*

Persons interact with cultures and social groups and this influences that person's becoming. In the process of interaction the person tries to internalize the beliefs and values of those cultures, and acquires a particular social identity which becomes part and parcel of the sort of person he is.

These factors are rather the *given*, i. e. person is born into them. There are factors of the self for which the person is held accountable. Belief is such a factor.

d) *Religious factor or belief*

The beliefs of a person play a dominant role in the formation of the moral agent, his character. A person's beliefs condition his

perspective, dispositions, intentions, norms, decisions etc. Belief refers to convictions or action-guiding principles. Beliefs differ; differences in moral action are due to the differences in beliefs. Believing also differs. A particular belief can be held with different degrees of conviction or commitment. The differences in believing are based on the amount, extent or depth of one's own conviction or commitment to the beliefs one holds.

Effects of beliefs

Beliefs determine the character of the person and establish his personal identity as a moral agent to a considerable extent. Once the beliefs become convictions, they influence his basic perspectives toward himself, toward others, toward the world and toward the possibilities of moral action. These basic convictions themselves can be changed and consequently his perspectives, dispositions and intentions also will change. Yes, he will be converted!

III. Maturation of Self¹⁰

The genotype, psychological, socio-cultural and religious factors contribute to the formation of a person's identity. There are also other factors that are immediately responsible for a person's moral maturity.

a) Perspective

By perspective is meant the particular angle from which the moral agent perceives the field of his activity. A person's perspective determines what is seen and what is not seen, which aspects of what is seen are outstanding etc. It lies at the basis of moral deliberation and actions giving them a distinctiveness. It helps a person to evaluate particular events. Difference in perspectives accounts for the difference in the moral evaluation.

b) Disposition / Habit

It is a readiness to act in one way rather than in another. It can be called virtue, habit, attitude. It creates in persons a "preferential readiness" to act in a certain way. This is the result of the person's perspective and repetition of acts in certain ways.

10 These ideas are developed mainly in *Can Ethics Be Christian? Christ and the Moral Life, Theology and Christian Ethics* and in several articles.

By acting in a certain way over a period of time, a certain quality is formed in him which disposes him to act in a similar way on subsequent occasions.

c) Intention

Having a particular perspective and disposition is not enough. The moral agent has to intend to act. Intention is a 'basic direction of activity, an articulation of what that direction is and ought to be, a purposive orientation for one's life.'

Intention is formed in accordance with "what one values, what one believes to be worthy of achieving, one's convictions about what is good and what ought to be, one's basic loyalties and commitment". It provides forward-looking continuity for the person, and illumines the way of his moral action. Particular intentions are centred around a basic intention. We can speak of the integrity of a person when his particular intentions centre around his basic intention. The general, basic, dominant intention will inform the agent while making reflections and before taking decisions.

These three, perspectives, dispositions or habit, and intentions affect primarily the person, not the action. These constitute the individuality of the agent. They provide the conditions of possibilities of action, without determining precisely what action one will do. Moral action is free and conditioned by the kind of person one has become.

IV. Moral Action and Character

Any responsible moral action consists of a process of decision-making. We can underline four main factors in this process. They are: perception, decision, norms, and powers.¹¹

a) Perception

It is a kind of discernment, an evaluative description of the field of action. The circumstance in which action is to be taken should be described, interpreted and evaluated. It involves various kinds of judgments concerning the possibility, morality etc. of the

¹¹ Gustafson has extensively discussed these ideas in *Treasure in Earthen Vessels*, and *The Church as Moral Decision-Maker*.

action. The perspective, disposition and intention of the moral agent influence the perception.

b) Decision

Perception should be followed by proper decision. A right moral decision is the result of a mature character. It is preceded by a critical and constructive reflection about one's feelings, desires, inclinations and other circumstances. The decision is conditioned by the sort of person one is. The agent has to interiorize values and norms before making a decision. The emphasis on the individuality or distinctiveness of the decision does not make the decision relative or subjective. The agent should be able to justify ethically both the decision and the principles followed.

c) Norms

The moral agent forms his perspective, disposition and intention informed and directed by values, norms and principles. Norms do not take away human freedom. It is difficult to indicate at which point of the moral action norms enter. The person should judge about what is good and bad. The commitment of the agent to some principles, values and rules plays an important role in this judgment.

d) Powers

It is not enough to arrive at a decision; the agent should have some powers to initiate action. His powers and capacities for action are determined to a great extent by the sort of person he has become and by the place in which his freedom is situated. The powers vary from person to person. The sort of person one has become does condition one's powers. A person cannot be held morally accountable for doing what is beyond his powers to do.

Next we will see how a person relates to his Christian faith and what change his commitment to faith makes in his moral character and moral action. Can we speak of a distinctively Christian moral person, perspective, disposition, intention, norm, character and so on?

V. Christian Moral Person

What is the nature of the influence of faith upon one's genotype? A person's religious beliefs can influence the ways in

which his genetic potentialities are developed. The behaviour may not change, but faith can condition the goals of such behaviour.

What is the relation between one's faith and his unconscious? Gustafson says faith cannot radically transform one's unconscious but can direct it in a different direction. How does a person's faith interact with his socio-cultural factors? The answer is 'persons internalize not only the language and other symbols but the values and outlooks of their religious cultures'. They may be guided by these values without conscious commitment. Socialization is the natural process where as faith is something consciously chosen. Process of socialization is a channel through which faith enters a person. Faith might give new insight and influence a person to check up himself and reorder his preferences and values that have become part of his character by virtue of socialization. As insights, preferences etc. change, his perspective also changes. He is in a position to give a new direction to his present and future life.

Christian moral character¹²

The moral agent should be formed. It means he should form his character; only a person of character can act with consistency. Moral action is not the result of intention but of a long process of discernment, deliberation and choice. In other words, it is the result of moral character. Actions reveal the character. A man of character acts with consistency; his beliefs and actions are harmonious; one can predict his actions in similar conditions.

There are some elements which account for the formation of character. First among them is the person's loyalty towards certain standards, norms, rules, principles or values as normative. Second, the person uses a particular frame of reference to interpret what is going on and what is required of him in the sphere of his action. Third, the person internalizes certain values and beliefs. The internalization of values and beliefs and the resulting dispositions and intentions give shape to a readiness or spontaneity in the agent. Character differs according to what one values.

Centrality of Christ

Christ is not a norm among other norms, but is a norm that *deeply* conditions one's choice with *compelling clarity*. It is the

12 Cf Gustafson, *Christian Ethics and the Community*, *op. cit.*

duty of every Christian to turn to Christ "the central norm, the main source of illumination for his words and deeds". To be a Christian is to accept the centrality of Christ and not to have centres other than Christ. To be a Christian is not only to declare Christ's centrality but also to be obliged by him, to let Christ permeate his perspective, disposition, intention, option etc. The centrality of Christ gives Christian a particular identity and distinctiveness.

Conclusion

Veritatis Splendor warns against the danger of the ethical reflection which advocates freedom without law, conscience without truth (Nos. 35-83). The human is truly free when he discerns God's law. He experiences his true freedom in his moral conscience which is formed respecting truth. The framework for the formation of moral character proposed by Gustafson gives enough space to apply the directions in *veritatis splendor*. Some of the notions have to be modified and better articulated. It emphasizes the need of a mature moral reflection integrating both freedom and responsibility. The moral agent should *act* and not *behave*. The Christian moral person should internalize the values of his Christian faith, make his decisions freely and responsibly. This can be achieved only by a sound moral education. It is not enough to educate the future priests and a few theologians alone but all (the faithful) should be taught how to make mature moral decisions and be accountable personally for their decisions instead of attributing the burden of their decision and action to the theologians and the magisterium.

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Wilson Ukken

The Human as the Final End of Creation in Kant

Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), one of the most important philosophers of modern period, focused in his pure philosophy on the human. According to him, the final end of nature or of the whole creation is the human who acquires this great position from the fact of being in nature the only reality through whom the supreme good can be promoted. The condition of the possibility of attaining to supreme good is the moral law within; the awareness of this law is the fact of our consciousness. The human is the final end of creation only in relation to moral law and the very presence of the moral makes the human personality holy, and as such worthy of respect. It is through the critical analysis of the nature and function of the faculty of reflecting judgment in its teleological use, which is proper to our way of knowing, that Kant exposes this subtle theme. Social evils arising from the absence of the correct understanding of human personality can be eliminated with the help of Kant's philosophical insight, whose study, of course, is much revealing and rewarding.

Introduction

Our society is possessed by the evil of pragmatism and consumerism. Only the strong — physically, economically, socially, etc. — have voice and power. Others are ignored or down-trodden. In this situation a search for the real worth of the human person is pertinent. It will enable us to honour both the weak and the strong, the rich and the poor, the literate and the illiterate irrespective of their positions or possessions. Such a consideration is necessary, since individuals face many social problems arising from the absence of deeper understanding of and respect for human personality. Social problems like poverty, murder, robbery, theft, drug-addiction, mercy-killing, abortion, child-labour, sexual deviations, character assassinations etc., are due to this. Politicians and educational authorities seem to ignore this crucial situation.

Against this contemporary background, we try to trace the great value of the human person in the philosophy of Immanuel

Kant, whose philosophical significance is brought out in the revealing adage among philosophers, "You can philosophize with Kant or against Kant, but you cannot philosophize without him."¹ According to him, the human is the final end of nature.² He wrote it and lived a life accordingly, respecting every human being. This is made clear from an event in his life roughly a week before his death. On February 3, 1804 Kant's doctor came to visit him. Although he was physically unable to stand up and greet his doctor, he tried to gather up his force and stood up. He was not ready to sit down again before his doctor being seated. As the doctor compelled him to do so, he gave him a thought-provoking reply: "The sense of humanity has not yet abandoned me".³ This is an excellent expression of the human traits in Kant's personality. Even if his feeble foot tottered, his great soul did not. He presents the human with a moral vocation at the peak of his transcendental philosophy⁴ as its central 'phenomenon' in his pure philosophy⁵ and so he reduces all its problem to the simple question, 'what is the human?'⁶ Hence in this article we try to expose how Kant arrives at the notion of the human as the final end of creation. Since he presents this theme in his famous *Third Critique, Critique of Judgment*, we begin with an explanation of the faculty of judgment⁷ and the newness of this Critique.

1. Faculty of Judgment

In general, judgment is "the faculty of thinking the particular as contained in the universal."⁸ As distinct from the understanding which is the faculty of rules, "judgment will be the faculty of

1 L. W. Beck, *Studies in the Philosophy of Kant* (Connecticut, 1981), p. 3.

2 *Critique of Judgment*, B 388, trans. p. 92 (B refers to the second edition in 1793; A, first edition in 1790), trans. J. C. Meredith (Oxford, 1928). (Cited afterwards as KU).

3 E. Cassirer, *Kant's Life and Thought*, trans. James Haden (1981), pp. 412-413.

4 F. P. Van Pitter, *Kant as Philosophical Anthropologist* (1971), p. 38.

5 *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten* BA V, trans. p. 1, trans. J.W. Ellington, *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals. In Immanuel Kant's Ethical Philosophy* (Indianapolis, 1988). (Cited as GMS).

6 *Logik* A 25 (A in 1800). Cf., *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* B 833 A 805 (B in 1787, A in 1781), trans. N. K. Smith, *Critique of Pure Reason* (London, 1933). (Cited as KrV).

7 It is well-known that, according to Kant, mind has three faculties: of knowing, of willing and of feeling pleasure. His famous Critiques are of these faculties.

8 KU B XXV A XXIII, trans. p. 18.

subsuming under rules, that is, of distinguishing whether something does or does not stand under a given rule."⁹ Thus judgment thinks the particular in relation to the universal. For Kant, the faculty of judgment is either determining or reflecting.

The function of the determining judgment is in cognition of and in relation to the faculty of understanding, where the given particular is subsumed under the universal of the understanding. Thus it determines the particular (hence the name determining judgment) given by the senses. What is most important here is that the universal is given by the faculty of understanding. The concepts of understanding are the universal; and the particular given through the senses are to be subsumed under these universal concepts. Thus in the first *Critique* the role of judgment was to subsume the phenomena under the concepts of understanding and so to determine them. In other words, by the universal of the understanding, it determines the given particular as an object of experience. The a priori conditions in those subsumptions are the transcendental schemata and the principles of understanding.¹⁰ Hence the determining judgment does not have any a priori principle of its own, but it uses the a priori concepts of understanding (i. e., categories) and thus determines the phenomena.¹¹

As regards the reflecting¹² judgment, "the particular is given and the universal has to be found for it."¹³ Its fundamental difference from the determining judgment is that no universal is given to it; the universal is to be sought.¹⁴ Hence it stands in need of a transcendental principle.¹⁵ Therefore Kant writes:

The reflecting judgment which is compelled to ascend from the particular in nature to the universal, stands, therefore, in need of a principle. This principle it cannot borrow from experience, because what it has to do is to establish just the unity of all empirical principles under higher, though likewise

9 KrV B 171 A 132.

10. Cf., KrV B 176 — B 294.

11 Editori Laterza, 1984, p. 88 (Cited as EE).

12 (The English translator uses the term 'reflective'; but, we have changed it as 'reflecting', because the original is 'reflectirend').

13 KU B XXVI A XXIV, trans. p. 18.

14 M. Horkheimer, *Ueber Kants Kritik der Urteilskraft* (Frankfurt, 1925), p. 18

15 A transcendental principle, for Kant, is that through which a universal condition is represented a priori and this condition is the only means for the things to become the objects of our cognition. Cf., KU B XXIX A XXVII, trans. p. 20.

empirical, principles, and thence the possibility of the systematic subordination of higher and lower. Such a transcendental principle, therefore, the reflecting judgment can only give from and to itself.¹⁶

This principle is only for the purpose of reflecting on the nature and not to determine any object of experience because the objects are already determined by the universal laws of understanding. Here the judgment has no concept from understanding and accordingly is in need of an a priori principle for its function. In short, the universal sought by the reflecting judgment is for our reflecting on nature (hence the name reflecting judgment), i. e., in relation to the subject who reflects or judges. Before seeking the transcendental principle required by this faculty, let us ask: why should we so reflect?

2. Newness in the Third Critique

The reason why we should search for the universal through the faculty of reflecting judgment stems from the very nature of the first *Critique*. There Kant's task was to seek the general conditions of the possibility of the objects of experience. Hence he presented the most general conditions under which alone any object can become the object of experience. Thus the first *Critique* has answered the question posited in it, i. e., 'how are synthetic judgments a priori possible?'¹⁷ and has given the universal laws for experience which are the categories of understanding and constitute the objects of experience. These laws are prescribed to nature by understanding¹⁸ and are the indispensable conditions of any object to be an object of experience. They are called transcendental laws of understanding, containing the condition of the possibility of experience in general.¹⁹ They present what is common to all objects of experience, leaving aside as undetermined or abstracting from the infinite differences of objects;²⁰ thus their unity is analytic.²¹

Since the infinite differences of objects of experience are not grouped nor brought to unity by the transcendental laws of under-

16 KU B XXVI-XXVII A XXIV-XXV, trans. pp. 18-19.

17 KrV B 19.

18 KrV B 165; KU B XVII A XVII, trans. p. 12.

19. EE trans. p. 75.

20 EE, trans. p. 83 (Kant's Italics). Cf. KU B XXVI A XXIV, trans. p. 18.

21 Cf., EE trans. p. 75 note.

standing, the reflecting judgment, judging on nature, thinks that the phenomena are connected to one another.²² It is through the presupposition of the particular laws of nature that the reflecting judgment does this and in this way brings order into our knowing. According to Kant, without this presupposition "we should have no order of nature in accordance with empirical laws ... no guiding-thread for an experience that has to be brought to bear upon these in all their variety, or for an investigation of them"²³, i.e., total chaos.

Therefore Kant writes: "Accordingly, in respect of nature's merely empirical laws, we must think in nature of a possibility of an endless multiplicity of empirical laws, ... In respect of these we estimate the unity of nature according to empirical laws ... Such a unity is one which must be necessarily presupposed and assumed, as otherwise we should not have a thoroughgoing connection of empirical cognition in a whole of experience."²⁴ Thus reflecting judgment sees nature as a system of particular laws which are the universal, sought for the given particular. Kant's emphatic statement suggests this again: "The *unity of nature in space and time* and the unity of the possible experience for us are, in fact, the same thing, for the first is only a complex of phenomena (the modes of representations) which can have its proper objective reality laws."²⁵ As including these qualitative differences of nature the unity, therefore, in contrast with that of the transcendental laws of understanding, brought under the system of particular laws is synthetic.²⁶

By particular (or empirical) laws of nature, Kant means the laws by which the phenomena (coming under the universal laws of understanding) are necessarily connected in different ways one to the other. Unlike the transcendental laws of understanding, these particular laws do not constitute the objects of experience; on the other hand, they presuppose the transcendental laws which have already determined the objects of experience. The judgment of the particular laws of nature are not a priori but a posteriori, for

22 Cf. J. Marechal, *Le Point de Départ de la Métaphysique*. Cahier 111, *La Critique de Kant* (Paris, 1944), p. 291.

23 KU B XXXVI A XXXIV, trans. p. 25.

24 KU B XXXIII A XXXI, trans. pp. 22-23.

25 EE trans. p. 83 (Kant's Italics).

26 EE trans. pp. 75-76 note.

the particular laws are found from the experience of nature.²⁷ Again, as laws, they are universal and necessary for the phenomena coming under them. They are called particular because only a certain group of phenomena come under these laws.²⁸ The introductions²⁹ of the third *Critique* present this theme. In short, the newness the *Critique of Judgment* presents is the new approach to nature through the reflection of the faculty of judgment with its a priori principle.

3. A priori Principle of Reflecting Judgment

About the famous first introduction of the *Critique of Judgment* Kant wrote to Beck:

The essential theme of this preface [i. e., of first introduction] ... concerns a unique and unusual presupposition of our reason: [it is almost] as if nature, in the diversity of its products, were inclined to make some accommodation to the limitations of our power of judgment, in the simplicity and noticeable unity of her laws and the presentation of the infinite diversity of her species in accordance with a certain law of continuity that makes it possible for us to organize them under a few basic concepts; ... as if nature acted arbitrarily and for the sake of our comprehension, sensing that we do not recognize this purposiveness as necessary but that we need it and hence are justified in assuming it a priori and in using the assumption as far as we can.³⁰

In this statement we see Kant speaking of the a priori principle of the reflecting judgment. This a priori³¹ which enables the function of the reflecting judgment is the law of the specification of nature, i. e., nature can be seen under the unity of diversely specified genera. This law is called '*the law of the specification of nature*

27 Cf., KrV B 165; F. O'Farrell, *Per Leggere la Critica della Ragion Pura di Kant* (Roma, 1989), pp. 91-92.

28 F. O'Farrell, 'Kant's Treatment of Teleological Principle' (*Gregorianum*, 1975), p. 647. (Cited as F. O'Farrell, 'Teleology').

29 Kant's third *Critique* has two introductions. Letter on August 18, 1793, *Gesammelte Schriften*, Band XI, p. 441, trans. p. 207. (Cited as GS). Kant's letters are edited and translated by A. Zweig, *Kant's Philosophical Correspondence 1759-1799* (Chicago, 1967).

30 Letter to J. S. Beck, August 18, 1793, GS Band XI, p. 441, trans. p. 208.

31 KU B V-VI A V (Kant's Italics), trans. p. 4.

in respect of its empirical laws.³² It is subjective, because the law is not prescribed to nature as in the case of the transcendental laws of understanding (as autonomy) but to itself (as heautonomy)³³, i. e., law is given to itself for itself. In other words, this a priori of the reflecting judgment is used to see nature in relation to the subject which reflects on nature and thus not constituting or determining the nature itself. Therefore, this a priori is subjective.

Again, the a priori principle of reflecting judgment implies the notion of finality.³⁴ Kant sees nature as a unity according to empirical laws which the judgment accepts as an a priori principle, and which

contains nevertheless the unity of law in the synthesis of its manifold in an intrinsically possible experience ... Consequently, as the unity of law in a synthesis ... is represented as a finality of objects (here of nature), so judgment ... merely reflecting, must regard nature in respect of the latter according to a *principle of finality* for our cognitive faculty, which then finds expression in the above maxims of judgment.³⁵

Since the a priori of the reflecting judgment is the specification of nature in its empirical laws, at a closer analysis, we grasp that this a priori refers to the technic of nature, i. e., nature as a work of art. So Kant writes: "particular empirical laws must be regarded, in respect of that which is left undetermined in them by these universal laws, according to a unity such as they would have if an understanding (though it be not ours) had supplied them for the benefit of our cognitive faculties, so as to render possible a system of experience according to particular natural laws".³⁶ Another understanding adapted nature for our purpose of knowing, i. e., nature is used as a means to achieve an end. In other words, "an understanding contained the ground of the unity of the manifold of its empirical laws".³⁷ It is the meaning of 'techne'

32 KU B XXXVII A XXXV (Kant's Italics), trans. p. 25.

33 KU B XXXVII A XXXV, trans. p. 25; Cf., EE trans. p. 105.

34 For the diverse meanings of the word 'finality', Cf., G. Tonelli, "Von den verschiedenen Bedeutungen des Wortes Zweckmassigkeit in der Kritik der Urteilkraft", (*Kant-Studien*, 1957), pp. 154-166.

35 KU B XXXIII-XXXIV A XXXI-XXXII (Kant's Italics), trans. p. 23.

36 KU B XXVII A XXV, trans. p. 19.

37 KU B XXVIII A XXVI, trans. pp. 19-20.

traditionally, i. e., "the use of means to achieve a determined end."³⁸ Nature as adapted to the end of our knowing is the subjective or formal finality of nature which is the a priori of the reflecting judgment. And this "finality of nature for our cognitive faculties and their employment, which manifestly radiates from them, is a transcendental principle of judgments."³⁹

Further, the a priori of reflecting judgment is connected with the feeling of pleasure, for the attainment of every aim — here the discovery of the law — is connected with pleasure. Kant writes: "The discovery ... that two or more empirical heterogeneous laws of nature are allied under one principle that embraces them both, is the ground of a very appreciable pleasure, often even of admiration, and such, too, as does not wear off even though we are already familiar enough with its object."⁴⁰ And this pleasure is based on the a priori ground of the principle of reflecting judgment, i. e., the finality of nature as if it were made for our cognitive powers. It is a pleasure in the existence or production of things in the nature, but independent of the appetitive powers. This is, in fact, the pleasure derived through the logical use of the reflecting judgment, for here the pleasure is through the mediacy of the concept, i. e., the particular law discovered. Thus we see the necessary (and so a priori) connection of the feeling of pleasure and the a priori principle of the reflecting judgment.⁴¹

4. Teleological use of reflecting Judgment

Reflecting judgment has its own a priori principle, according to which it functions. Compared to the other two a priori principles (as seen in other *Critiques*), the a priori for the teleological use of judgment, as Kant himself notes⁴², is 'the least rich'. It is the least rich principle since in the other two cases, the principles prescribed laws to the 'objects' (i. e., understanding to nature; practical reason to freedom); but in teleology this principle enables the reflecting power of judgment merely to reflect on nature but not to determine anything as regards the object, i. e., nature. The

38 F. O'Farrell, "Aesthetics", p. 416.

39 KU B XXXI A XXIX, trans. p. 22.

40 KU B XL A XXXVIII, trans. p. 27.

41 Cf., KU BA VIII, trans. pp. 5-6. Teleological use we will see in the sequel.

42 Letter to K. L. Reinhold on December 28, 1787, GS Band X, p. 515, trans. p. 128.

a priori of reflecting judgment is the formal or subjective finality of nature. Since Kant discusses teleology as the proper subject matter of reflecting judgment belonging to the critical system⁴³, in our attempt of seeking the nature of the human as the ultimate end, we concentrate on this faculty of soul in its teleological function. To begin with, let us take up the meaning of teleological conception.

4.1. Notion of Teleology

In teleological use⁴⁴ of the reflecting judgment, it judges that the finality of things in nature is the cause (ground) of its production (hence the ground of their possibility). Therefore it is called objective finality: i. e., "the harmony of the form of the object with the possibility of the thing itself according to an antecedent concept of it containing the ground of this form."⁴⁵

There are two kinds of objective finality, namely formal and material. Geometrical figures are drawn according to a principle; we see an objective finality here. Kant specifies its use: "This finality is one of convenience on the part of the figure for solving a number of problems by a single principle."⁴⁶ Such a finality is objective and intellectual, but it is formal not real, because "it is a finality which does not imply an underlying end, and which, therefore, does not stand in need of teleology."⁴⁷ Hence formal objective finality helps to produce the proposed figures; it is cognized through reason; but the possibility of objects themselves is not possible through it (for it indicates only such use). So Kant writes: "Pure mathematics can never deal with the real existence of things, but only their possibility... Hence it cannot touch the question of cause and effect, and, consequently, all the finality there observed must always be regarded simply as formal, and never as a physical end."⁴⁸

But things, having real existence, have an end. It is real or material finality. Only with the concept of the end do we reach

43 This is evident from the famous paragraph 76 of the third *Critique*. Cf., KU B 339 ff A 335 ff, trans. pp. 55 ff.

44 Cf., EE, trans. pp. 113 ff.

This is a judgment of knowledge belonging to the faculty of reflecting judgment not to the determining one. Cf., EE, trans. pp. 99 ff.

45 KU B XLVIII-XLIX A XLVI-XLVII, trans. p. 33.

46 KU B 271 A 267, trans. p. 7.

47. KU B 274 A 270, trans. p. 9.

48 KU B 279 A 275 note, trans. p. 12.

the conception of objective and material finality.⁴⁹ And it is this notion of the end that distinguishes the teleological judgment. As we observe a thing, we can see it as a means to an end (utility): such finality is relative or extrinsic finality. But if a thing is an end in itself, it is intrinsic finality.⁵⁰ Thus, from experience we get this notion of objective finality, the notion of acting for an end is given by practical reason.⁵¹ Now, what is the role of reflecting judgment in objective finality? It applies (hence a function of judgment) the concept of end (given by reason) to the empirically given thing of nature. In other words, to the concept of reason (i. e., end), reflecting judgment extends to the empirically-given objective finality.⁵² Hence teleological judgment is not directly connected with the a priori principle of the reflecting judgment (i. e., formal subjective finality). On the other hand, we have a new approach to nature through the concept of end given by practical reason. Yet, the teleological judgment functions with an a priori principle. It is because the given object of nature, i. e., that something is, for example, an eye, is compared with its purpose, i. e., its end and its 'should be'; e. g., is it fit for seeing? Since the 'should be' cannot be derived from experience, it is a priori and in this way teleological judgment acquires an a priori principle.⁵³ It judges things in nature as physical ends.

Kant sees the physical end as the cause and effect of itself. The cause under discussion at this point is final cause. Kant gives the example of a house. House is the cause of rent (received money); the representation of the rent (money) is the cause of the production of the house. This causal nexus is the final cause.⁵⁴ In physical end, Kant writes that

Its parts must in their collective unity reciprocally produce one another alike as to form and combination, and thus by their own causality produce a whole, the conception of which,

49 KU B 279 A 275 note, trans. p. 12.

50 KU B 280 A 276, trans. p. 13.

Kant writes: "By extrinsic finality I mean the finality that exists where one thing in nature subserves another as means to an end". KU B 379 A 375, trans. p. 86.

51 I. Kant, *Die Metaphysik der Sitten Tugendlehre* A 12 (A in 1797).

52 F. O'Farrell, "Teleology", p. 651.

53. Cf. EE, trans. pp. 123-125.

54 KU B 290 A 286, trans. p. 20.

conversely — in a being possessing the causality according to conceptions that is adequate for such a product — could in turn be the cause of the whole according to a principle, so that, consequently, the nexus of *efficient causes* might be no less estimated as an *operation brought about by final causes*.⁵⁵

In other words, the whole (or unity of the parts) determines the production of the parts. Here the parts are the end of production and the whole is the means. Again, the parts produce or create the unity of all parts (or the whole). Thus unity of the whole is the end; parts, instead, are the means. So the whole and its parts work reciprocally as means and end. Such a product is a natural product, an organized being, known as physical end.⁵⁶ The organized being provides objective reality to the conception of an end; hence it is the basis and proper object of teleology. This view of a thing as an intrinsically physical end is not of determining judgment, but of the reflecting judgment.⁵⁷ According to Kant teleology has its own principle.

4.2. Principle of Teleology

The principle Kant formulates is as follows: *An organized natural product is one in which every part is reciprocally both end and means*.⁵⁸ In such a product nothing is in vain or without end (for, as we have seen, everything is reciprocally purposeful). We derive the matter of this principle through experience or observation; experience, however, does not provide us necessity and universality.⁵⁹ Since it is a principle, the universality and necessity are ascribed to it and so it must have a priori ground which is the final causality in the knowing subject.⁶⁰

Accordingly, this principle says that nothing happens by chance. Its conception leads to another order of existence beyond the mere mechanism of nature. Kant extends this end to the whole nature (i. e., extending beyond the organized beings) and writes: "Hence, if that unity of the idea is actually to serve as the *a priori* determining ground of a natural law of the causality of

55 KU B 291 A 287 (Kant's italics), trans. p. 21.

56 Cf., KU B 293, A 289, B 379 A 374, trans. pp. 22, 86.

57 KU B 295 A 291, B 301 A 297, trans. pp. 24, 28.

58 KU B 296 A 292 (Kant's Italics), trans. p. 24.

59. KrV B 3-4,

60 F. O'Farrell, "Teleology", p. 656.

such a form of the composite, the end of nature must be made to extend to *everything* contained in its product."⁶¹ The right to extend the concept of end seen in the organized beings even to non-organic beings (and thus to nature as a whole) depends on the fact that non-organic beings can have the purpose of serving the organic beings (thus extrinsic objective finality).⁶² Hence Kant declares:

There is an essential distinction between estimating a thing as a physical end in virtue of its intrinsic form and regarding the real existence of this thing as an end of nature. To maintain the latter view we require, not merely the conception of a possible end, but a knowledge of the final end (*scopus*) of nature. This involves our referring nature to something supersensible, a reference that far transcends any teleological knowledge we have of nature; for, to find the end of the real existence of nature itself, we must look beyond nature.⁶³

Kant sees nature as a system of ends, the task teleological judgment achieves. It leads to the supersensible ground, which is common or same for both organized and non-organized beings. Hence he writes: "Alike for the popular understanding and for the philosopher they are, too, the only valid argument for its dependence upon and its origin from an extramundane Being, and from one, moreover, that the above final form shows to be intelligent. Thus they indicate that teleology must look to a theology for a complete answer to its inquiries."⁶⁴ Such an inquiry provides us with the idea of such a being, but not that it exists. It tells us that a highest cause operates designedly, for "the employment of our power of judgment in its reflection on the ends in nature, which are incapable of being thought on any other principle than that of the intentional causality of a highest cause."⁶⁵ Thus teleology shows that nature as a system of ends makes us think of a supersensible ground. Now, according to Kant, teleological conception is proper to our knowing.

5. Teleological conception and our knowing

Since our cognitive faculties consist of two heterogeneous factors (i.e., understanding's concept and sensibility's intuition),

61 KU B 297 A 293 (Kant's Italics), trans. p. 24.

62 KU B 379-380 A 375, trans. p. 86. 63. KU B 299 A 295-296, trans. p. 27.

64 KU B 335 A 331, trans. p. 52.

65. KU B 336 A 332, trans. p. 52.

Kant sees the necessity of making the distinction of possibility and actuality in our knowing. Possibility refers to "the position of the representation of a thing relatively to our conception"; actuality signifies "the positing of the thing in its immediate self-existence apart from this conception".⁶⁶ This distinction implies that one may think something as possible; it need not be actual. So there is no transition to actuality from mere possibility. However, this distinction is valid only for our knowing (i.e., there can be another type of knowing which has no such distinction, intuitive understanding) and accordingly, ours is a subjective necessity.

In the practical sphere also we come to see, Kant tells us⁶⁷, the distinction of absolute necessity and physical contingency because what ought to happen does not happen often. Hence there arises the distinction of 'ought to do' and the actual action. It is only because of the relation to sensibility that our practical faculty has to think of the moral law as command, creating obligation (i.e., we may think of a reason for which moral law is actual). Hence it is of subjective necessity to see this distinction.

In the case of the faculty of judgment⁶⁸ the contrast appears as regards mechanism⁶⁹ and technique of nature because of our mode of knowing. Our understanding contains the universal and hence moves to the particular which in itself is contingent upon the universal of the understanding. It abstracts from everything particular and must move from the universal to the particular (thus only does it attain reality).⁷⁰ The particular possesses no finality in determining the use of judgment because the particular is subsumed under the universal of the understanding. Thus for making determinate judgment, the particular must be so subsumed. Kant continues:

But the particular by its very nature contains something contingent in respect of the universal. Yet reason demands that there shall also be unity in the synthesis of the particular laws of nature, and, consequently, conformity to law — and a

66 KU B 340 A 337, trans. p. 56.

67. KU B 342 A 338, trans. p. 58.

68 KU B 343-344 A 339-340, trans. pp. 59-60.

69 Kant writes of mechanism: "Ich nenne Mechanismus der Natur, wo die Causalität (der Ursache) einer Begebenheit selbst wieder Begebenheit ist ...". *Reflexionen* 5978, GS Band XVIII, p. 413.

70 *Reflexionen* 215, GS Band XV, p. 82.

derivation *a priori* of the particular from the universal laws in the point of their contingent content is not possible by any defining of the conception of the object. Now the above conformity to law on the part of the contingent is termed finality.⁷¹

The particular is contingent compared to the universal (of the understanding) because it is not derived from the latter. But reason in its systematic function demands unity for the particular laws of nature, since it is a faculty of knowing from *a priori* principles, demanding systematic unity.⁷² And the particular, although contingent, since it comes to (or seeks) the synthesis under the particular laws (thus manifests conformity to law), expresses finality, because finality signifies the end as the condition of the possibility (here, of the particular). Hence Kant asserts that the conception of the finality of nature in its products (not to determine these products) is a necessary conception of the human judgment in respect of nature. It is a subjective principle for the judgment, having a regulative use and used as if it were an objective principle. And thus teleology is the proper mode of thinking according to our mode of knowing. Since in its *a priori* function reason demands the systematic unity of the particular laws of nature, the particular conforms to these laws which is exactly the finality from the part of the contingent. Thus finality is the proper way of our knowing or of our understanding. In other words, it is of subjective necessity to reflect according to the principle of finality in nature.

We have just mentioned that our understanding moves from the universal to the particular. This refers to the relation of the understanding to the faculty of judgment, for the latter seeks the universal for the particular. Now, Kant holds that our understanding is contingent because its universal does not determine the particular, instead its universal as seen in its concepts is a common characteristic for many. Since this universal does not contain the multiplicity of the particular, it is called analytical universal.⁷³ Hence for our discursive understanding "the character and variety to be found in the particular given to it in nature and capable of

71 KU B 344 A 340 (Kant's *Italics*), trans. p. 59.

72 KrV B 355 A 298-299, B 92 A 67, B 692 A 664.

73 KU B 348 A 344, trans. p. 63.

being brought under its conceptions must certainly be contingent."⁷⁴ Kant thus concludes that to the very constitution of our understanding belongs contingency (compared with the intuitive understanding⁷⁵). Since it is contingent, the reduction of the multiplicity of the particular to the unity of knowledge causes a difficulty for our understanding, a difficulty which is not seen in intuitive understanding.⁷⁶

Although the particular is not determined by the analytical universal of our understanding (because it is not derived from this universal), it has to be brought under the universal by the faculty of judgment. Thus the particular has to accord with our judgment. Kant states:

Nevertheless we are able to conceive the possibility of such an accord of the things in nature with the power of judgment — an accord which we represent as contingent, and, consequently, as only possible by means of an end directed to its production. But, to do so, we must at the same time imagine an understanding different from our own, relative to which — and, what is more, without starting to attribute an end to it — we may represent the above accord of natural laws with our power of judgment, which for our understanding is only thinkable when ends are introduced as a middle term effecting the connexion, as *necessary*.⁷⁷

Since the particular is not derived from the universal of our understanding, the subsumption of it through the power of judgment under the universal demands that the particular is adapted for the subsumption. The question follows that, who adapted it? Thus we come to another understanding that is intended for our knowing⁷⁸. Accordingly the concept of end in relation to another understanding enters into the thinking of this accordance.

However the intuitive understanding which has the synthetic universal moves to the particular, i.e., it moves from the whole to its parts. The synthetic universal contains the unifying ground of the parts with all their differences. On the other hand, our under-

74 KU B 347 A 343, trans. p. 62.

75. KrV B 135.

76 Cf., KU B 347 A 343, trans. p. 62.

77 KU B 348 A 344 (Kant's Italics), trans. p. 63.

78 F. O'Farrell, "Teleology", p. 667.

standing moves from parts to the contingent whole because we consider a real whole in nature as an effect of the concurring dynamical forces of parts and thus the parts become the ground of the possibility of the whole⁷⁹. It follows, then, that our discursive understanding cannot think that the whole is the ground of the possibility of parts; if it thinks so, it gets into contradiction. So Kant writes: "But the *representation* of a whole may contain the source of the possibility of the form of that whole and of the nexus of the parts which that form involves. This is our only road."⁸⁰ Now, the representation of the whole as the ground of the connection of parts means the whole is the effect and the representation is the cause. This is exactly the notion of end: "the product of a cause whose determining ground is merely the representation of its effect."⁸¹, i. e., final causality. In short, the teleological conception of nature belongs to our knowing by subjective necessity; from the very nature of our knowing. Then, how do we see mechanism and teleology together?

6. Union of Teleology and Mechanism

According to Kant everything in nature as the object of sense must be explained according to mechanical laws⁸², for the object of our sensibility is the phenomenon which is necessarily conditioned by the preceding phenomenon (this is the constitutive 'law' of the object of experience, i. e., the principle of mechanical causality). However, this principle alone is not sufficient to explain at least certain cases in nature. He writes: "It is utterly impossible for human reason, or for any finite reason qualitatively resembling ours, however, much it may surpass it in degree, to hope to understand the generation even of a blade of grass from mere mechanical causes"⁸³. Hence Kant sees the need of both teleological and mechanical principles in looking at nature and warns us not to exclude one or the other as if they contradict themselves.⁸⁴ How, then, is their union possible?

Kant sees that in the common source of these principles they are united, and this is the supersensible forming the basis of nature

79 Cf., KU B 349 A 345, trans. p. 63; *Reflexionen* 5553. GS Band XVIII, p. 226.

80 KU B 350 A 346 (Kant's *Italics*), trans. p. 64

81 KU B 350 A 346, trans. p. 64.

82. KU B 352 A 348, trans. p. 66.

83 KU B 353 A 349, trans. p. 66

84. KU B 352 A 348, trans. p. 66.

as phenomenon.⁸⁵ But since no determinate conception of this union in the supersensible from a theoretical point of view, is possible, we cannot stop with the union in this sphere. Again, in organized beings — and by extension in nature as a whole — we see finality at work; at the same time in nature mechanical laws are also at work. Hence unification is necessary and is to be possible in nature which is phenomenon for us.

It is only through the subordination of the mechanical to the technique of nature that this unification is possible. Kant writes: "For where ends are thought as the sources of the possibility of certain things, means have also to be supposed. Now the law of the efficient causality of a means, considered *in its own right*, requires nothing that presupposes an end, and, consequently, may be both mechanical and yet a subordinate cause of designed effects."⁸⁶ In considering end as the ground of the possibility of things, we necessarily presuppose means, too. These means, on the other hand, do not presuppose any end, instead they work mechanically. Thus these means, being subordinated to end or finality, work mechanically. Their subordination is valid to the whole extent of nature bringing the mechanical principle always under the teleological finality. Again, from the total point of view of the critical system this subordination is necessary, for Kant writes: "By the constitution of our understanding we must subordinate such mechanical grounds, one and all, to a teleological principle."⁸⁷

Reflecting judgment in its a priori function, thus, brings the whole of nature under its principle of finality. It reflects further: what is the purpose of nature itself? Is there any being in nature which can be considered as the end of the whole nature? Is there any final end for nature?

7. The Human as the Final End

Kant sees that to explain the reason of the existence of things as end of nature, we have to relate these things to something supersensible which is precisely the notion of the final end⁸⁸ because it refers to that which serves as the unavoidable and

85 KU B 358 A 354, trans. p. 70

86 KU B 361 A 357 (Kant's Italics), trans. p. 72.

87 KU B 363.A 358, trans. p. 73.

88. KU B 299 A 295, trans. p. 27.

sufficient condition of all other ends.⁸⁹ How do we find this final end in nature? Kant observes that if we go through nature we do not find any being capable of laying claim to be the final end of creation.⁹⁰ Then, how do we find it?

Seeing the life forms in the vegetable kingdom, one may ask: 'for what purpose does it exist?' The answer may be, for the animal kingdom. For what, Kant continues, do the animal kingdom and the whole nature exist? For the human, holds Kant, and for the manifold uses of human intelligence. Since the human alone can act with an end in view, he forms a system of ends and so is the ultimate end of creation. As Kant states: "He [i. e., the human] is the ultimate end of creation here upon earth, because he is the one and only being upon it that is able to form a conception of ends, and from an aggregate of things purposively fashioned to construct by the aid of his reason a system of ends."⁹¹ Thus, only through the human, does creation receive a final end, for Kant writes: "Without the human... the whole creation would be a mere wilderness, a thing in vain, and have no final end."⁹²

Kant continues: "If this end is something which must be found in man himself, it must be of such kind that man himself may be satisfied by means of nature and its beneficence, or else it is the aptitude and skill for all manner of ends for which he may employ nature both external and internal. The former end of nature would be the *happiness* of the human, the latter his *culture*."⁹⁴

Kant sees that happiness through the possession of external things of nature is not the greatest human good, for our nature is so constituted not to rest satisfied with such things. Thus Kant denies the possibility of setting such happiness as the final end of the human.⁹⁵ Culture, on the other hand, means "the production in a rational being of an aptitude for any ends whatever of his own choosing, consequently of the aptitude of a being in his freedom."⁹⁶

89 I. Kant, *Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft* BAX-XI note (B in 1794, A in 1793), trans. by T. M. Greene and H. H. Hudson, *Religion within the Bounds of Reason Alone* (NY., 1960), p. 6 note. (Cited as RGv).

90 KU B 382 A 377, trans. p. 88.

91. KU B 383 A 378, trans. p. 88.

92 KU B 410 A 406, trans. p. 108.

94 KU B 388 A 383-384 (Kant's Italics), trans. p. 92.

95 Cf., KU B 389-390 A 384-385, trans. p. 92-93.

96 KU B 391 A 387 trans. p. 94.

In promoting culture Kant does not include all its sorts, e. g., skill, because through the promotion of skill only inequality in society is created which keeps the masses in a state of oppression.⁹⁷ Hence he speaks of the discipline of the inclination for the furthering of humanity as the important element in culture. This disciplining, Kant holds, enables us to reflect that "in the depths of our nature there is an aptitude for higher ends"⁹⁸. This is the final end in connection with nature to be promoted in humans.⁹⁹ However, Kant acknowledges human uniqueness. For he writes:

Now we have in the world beings of but one kind whose causality is teleological, or directed to ends, and which at the same time are beings of such character that the law according to which they have to determine ends for themselves is represented by themselves as unconditioned and not dependent on anything in nature, but as necessary in itself. The being of this kind is man, but man regarded as noumenon. He is the only natural creature whose peculiar objective characterization is nevertheless such as to enable us to recognize in him a supersensible faculty—his *freedom*—and to perceive both the law of the causality and the object of freedom which that faculty is able to set before itself as the highest end – the supreme good in the world¹⁰⁰.

It is a central passage in Kant's discussion of the teleological use of reflecting judgment and in our understanding of the human as the ultimate end of nature. For Kant brings into this discussion the essential ideas as regards the notion of final end which is to be seen in the human. Moreover, through this conception, the discussion of teleology takes a new direction in the third *Critique*. How is nature teleologically subordinated by the noumenal freedom?

Referring to the noumenal dimension of the human as moral agent, Kant shows that the condition for the realization of the supreme good lies in him, i. e., freedom expressed through moral law. This noumenal causality is unconditioned. Since the realization of the supreme good is in nature, it is subjecting nature or using nature. Thus promoting this supreme

97 Cf., KU B 392-393 A 387-388, trans. p. 95.

98 KU B 395 A 391, trans. p. 97.

99 Kant, *Zum ewigen Frieden* B 62 A 61 (B in 1796, A in 1795).

100 KU B 398 A 393 (Kant's italics), trans. p. 99.

good according to this objective causality of reason, the human subjects the whole nature, i. e., nature is teleologically subordinated. And nature's final end, which must be an unconditioned one¹⁰¹, is the human¹⁰² in his self-legislation, i. e., freedom. Kant states emphatically: "it is only as a moral being that the human can be the final end of creation"¹⁰³; again "a good will is that where by man's existence can alone possess an absolute worth, and in relation to which the existence of the world can have a *final end*".¹⁰⁴

That the human as a moral being is the final end of creation implies something more. Kant considers the human in his noumenal causality (i. e., freedom or autonomy) as an end in himself¹⁰⁵ when he states that "rational nature exists as an end in itself."¹⁰⁶ Kant considers freedom as spontaneity: that which 'starts' the action from itself¹⁰⁷. The presence of this noumenal causality of holy law makes the person holy. Kant writes: "Man... must regard *humanity* in his own person as holy"¹⁰⁸.

Further, at a closer examination, we see that through the presentation of the human as the final end of nature (i.e., seeing him in the noumenal sphere), reflecting judgment 'reflects away' nature or, in other words, nature slowly disappears in Kant's system of a priori thinking.

8. Respect for Person

Kant's treatment of the function of the teleological judgment takes us, thus, to the noumenal world of moral law whose presence in the human makes his personality holy. The second Critique presents the function of practical reason with its objective principle of moral law. This function is the determination of the will to action. Here a moral feeling arises in

101 KU B 397 A 393, trans. p. 98.

102 RGV B 73 A 67 (Kant's Italics), trans. p. 54.

103 KU B 400 A 395, trans. p. 100 note.

104 KU B 412 A 407, (Kant's Italics), trans. p. 109.

105 *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft* A 155-156, translated by J. M. D. Meikljohn, *The Great Books of the Western World Kant*, Vol. 42 (Chicago, 1952), p. 328 (A in 1788, Cited as KpV).

106 GMS BA 66, trans. p. 36.

107 See the article, "Philosophy as Practical in Kant", *The Living Word* (Vol. 100, 1994), pp. 317-330.

108 KpV A 155 (Kant's Italics), trans. p. 328.

the human to respect oneself and others because of the very presence of moral law within. How does Kant develop this idea?

In the determination of the will by the moral law, there is no room for inclinations. Moral law checks inclinations like self-regard, self-love, selfishness, self-conceit etc. So Kant writes: "By opposing the subjective antagonism of inclinations, it *weakens* self-conceit; and since it even *breaks down*, that is, humiliates, this conceit, it is an object of the highest respect and consequently, is the foundation of a positive feeling which is not of empirical origin, but known *a priori*"¹¹⁰. Thus the moral law humbles every human (as one compares with it the physical propensities of his nature). Since whatever humbles us in our consciousness is a determining principle of our will and something positive, it awakes in us respect for itself. Thus moral law is subjectively a cause of respect. So Kant writes: "Now since everything that enters into self-love belongs to inclination and all inclinations rest on feelings, and consequently whatever checks all feelings together in self-love has necessarily, ... an influence on feeling; hence we comprehend how it is possible to perceive *a priori* that the moral law can produce an effect on feeling"¹¹¹. Such an effect is the feeling of respect produced by moral law: the feeling of respect for moral law¹¹². This feeling, in fact, is properly a moral feeling: "...the capacity of taking such an interest in the law (or respect for the moral law itself)..."¹¹³.

This respect is neither love, nor admiration; it is something more than that. *Respect* is a *tribute* which we cannot refuse to merit, whether we will or not; we may indeed outwardly withhold it, but we cannot help feeling it inwardly"¹¹⁴. It is a tribute, for it is an effect produced necessarily in one's sensibility by the moral law¹¹⁵. And it is always to persons that we show respect and exactly to the law that is exhibited in the person¹¹⁶. Hence, respect for the law, according to Kant, is "the consciousness

110 KpV A 130 (Kant's Italics), trans. p. 322.

111 KpV A 132 (Kant's Italics), trans. p. 322.

112 Cf., KpV A 133, trans. p. 322-323; KU BA 35-36, trans. p. 63.

113 KpV A 142 (Kant's Italics), trans. p. 325.

114 KpV A 137 (Kant's Italics), trans. p. 323.

115 F. O'Farrell, *Per Leggere la Critica della Ragion Pratica di Kant* (Roma, 1990), p. 107.

116 KpV A 138, trans. p. 324; CF. GMS BA 16 note, trans. p. 14, note no 14.

of a *free* submission of the will to the law, yet combined with an inevitable constraint put upon all inclinations, though only by our reason''¹¹⁷. This law is nothing other than the moral law, the a priori principle of practical reason.

If the aristocracy of Kant's period neglected the peasants, he specifically insists with the subtle foundation of his philosophy that one should 'learn' to respect oneself and others¹¹⁸, since humanity in its very nature is holy because of the presence of moral law within.

Conclusion

Kant's third Critique seeks the function of the faculty of reflecting judgment which has for its teleological use objective finality as an a priori principle. According to this principle, in an organized being nothing is in vain. Everything in it functions as both means and end. By extending this principle to the whole nature by virtue of extrinsic finality, nature is seen as acting for the end. The end, which presupposes no other end is the final end for Kant. This final end therefore of the whole nature is the human. It is the freedom of the moral agent that makes him the final end of creation. The very presence of moral law and freedom in us enables us to respect ourselves and others. Thus human respect springs from the moral law within; this very law is the ground for the reflecting judgment to think of the human as the final end of creation.

Although Kant's doctrine of teleology invited serious criticisms from his successors, its greatest merit is that the human is presented as the final end of creation on pure philosophical foundation and without introducing any religious and theological considerations. Hence it seems that this doctrine has a perennial value to all who seek truth rationally — irrespective of any religious thinking — and will help them to respect the human comprehending his fundamental and unique position in nature.

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¹¹⁷ KpV A 142-143 (Kant's Italics), trans. p. 325.

¹¹⁸ Cf., R. J. Sullivan, *Immanuel Kant's Moral Theory* (Cambridge, 1989), Ch. 14.

Reflections on the Encyclical *Evangelium Vitae*

Evangelium Vitae (EV) — 'The Gospel of Life' — published in March 1995 is the second major encyclical on Morals to come from the pen of Pope John Paul II. Its precursor, *Veritatis Splendor*, despite the variety of reactions it aroused, has gone on record as a major magisterial teaching on fundamental moral theology. EV is a worthy sequel to that, though its concern is restricted to the value of human life and related moral issues. By its own testimony, EV is "a precise and vigorous reaffirmation of the value of human life and its inviolability" and a strong appeal for action, namely, to "respect, protect, love and serve life, every human life" (5).

This long encyclical, running into 105 articles, consists of 4 chapters, an introduction and a conclusion. The first chapter which discusses the present day threats to and attacks on human life contextualizes the encyclical by depicting the contemporary socio-cultural environment which makes the teaching of the encyclical quite relevant and necessary. The second chapter is a positive presentation of the value and worth of human life from a natural as well as a christian point of view. It is followed by a discussion, in the third chapter, of the basic demands of the commandment "Do not kill". The final chapter comprises guidelines and suggestions for action at various levels for protecting and promoting life. This article tries to reflect some of the insights contained in the encyclical's teaching on the value of life. It also attempts to shed some light on a couple of points which are either debatable or practically very important.

The value of human life

What is the gospel of life? It is the good news about the dignity and value of the human person and his/her life. This good news was announced already before the creation of the human when God said "Let us make man in our image and

likeness" (Gen 1:26). Before the creation of the human, God had made many things and living beings which were good, very good. But He was not satisfied with them because they did not possess the spiritual entity and identity with which the human would be endowed and which reflected the divine image in a unique manner. The human was to come as the crown of the visible creation. As St Ambrose says, "the creation of the world ends with the formation of the masterpiece, which is man" (35).

Ordinary experience and simple reflection shows that humans reflect the image of God in various ways. Endowed with intellect, the human person is capable of knowing everything; penetrating into the secrets of nature, understanding himself, rising up to God and peeping into the Divine Mystery. In a cultural milieu dominated by technological wonders like supercomputers some people ask what is after all human intelligence? Is it not a 'pigmy' before such? Yes, computers are maximally efficient and wondrous. But they are wonders designed and operated by human intelligence. Besides, human intelligence is an endowment of a spiritual, free and self-conscious entity that is the human person. Therefore, even the poor intelligence of a person is entitatively nobler and greater than any computer.

The human person through the will and its exercise, is a free and autonomous being, master of his/her own decisions and actions. This differentiates him/her from all other beings whose operations are controlled by their biology and chemistry, and places him/her closer to God who is supremely free. The moral sense or conscience with which the human is endowed is another clear sign of the divine imprint. As Vatican Council II teaches, 'conscience is the core and sanctuary of the human person where he is alone with God and where the voice of God, calling him to do good and avoid evil, resounds' (G.S16). The human capacity for rational knowledge and freedom, together with moral sense, makes one a responsible being. S/He has therefore been made the head of the visible creation, entrusted with the mandate of caring for it and leading it to fulfilment (Gen 1/27). Thus the human becomes the 'co-creator' sharing in another prerogative of God, who is the Creator of all things. At the same time s/he shares, especially through her/his body, in the very nature of the material creation, becomes a

close partner of it and subsumes it in her/himself in an exalted manner. What would have been the meaning and significance of the visible creation without an intelligent and spiritual being like the human? With humans, all of them fall into place and gain meaning and significance. The Rio declaration of the Earth Summit meaningfully stated that "Human beings are at the centre of the concern for sustainable development". Ecological balance should be kept and nature should be protected; it is essential for the good of humanity, present and future.

There is no wonder that the psalmist, having grasped the grandeur of the human, exclaims: "what is man that Thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him? You have made him a little less than the angels and crowned him with glory and splendour (Ps 8/4-5). This human is destined for eternal life. Eternal life is not merely an everlasting life, but it is life with the Eternal One; a life of the children of God (37-38). It is a life of love and communion with God; it is a life of perfect fulfilment and bliss. The human who is called to such a destiny cannot be a lowly creature. In fact, his/her destiny reveals his/her greatness. For his/her redemption, God did not spare even His Son (Jn 3/15-16). The Son of God became man, suffered, died and resurrected so that humans might have eternal life and have it abundantly (Jn 10/10). St Irenaeus epitomized the dignity of the human when he said that "man, the living man, is the glory of God; but the life of man consists in the vision of God". (38) When the human, created in the image of God, is hale, healthy and happy God's plan for the world is realized and God is glorified. But it does not end there, for human life finally consists in union with God where they are beatified and God's glory perfected.

Human life, an absolute value?

The talk about the dignity of the human person and value of human life refers immediately to this-worldly existence. It is this life that is to be respected and promoted here and now. But we have seen that human life transcends this world and that his/her call to eternal life is an important element constitutive of his/her dignity. Hence the question whether earthly human existence is an absolute value; whether it is something that has to be protected at all costs (2). Evidently, it is not the ultimate

value. What is ultimate for the human is the eternal life; life in communion with God. Compared to it, the earthly life is of "penultimate value". It is closely associated with eternal life, because "Life in time is the fundamental condition, the initial stage and an integral part of the entire unified process of human existence" (2). Hence, there is no eternal life independent of the earthly human life. Eternal life is the final goal and full realization of this life, made possible by the grace of God. Therefore, the earthly human life, though not of absolute or ultimate value, yet comes from God, moves to God and ends in God (38), and is therefore a sacred reality that deserves to be protected and promoted.

Protect and Promote life

It is fitting therefore that the basic law of God regarding life "Do not kill" (Exod 20/13) is placed at the heart of the Decalogue, after our duties to God and parents, the Creator and the generators of our life, but before all other obligations. Negatively, this commandment asks us only the minimum of our duty towards human life, i. e. not to kill. But positively it requires us to respect and love every human person. The one who proclaimed and lived this law to the full was Jesus himself. By assuming human nature and living a human life, Jesus confirmed its dignity and worth and divinized it. He respected every person and gave special care to the weak and lowly: the sick, sinners, outcasts, women, and children. He has asked us not only not to kill, but not even to call another a fool; he has told us that all are our brothers and sisters and that even our enemies are friends (Mt 5/22, 43 ff). He has assured us that "as long as you did it to one of my least brethren, you did it to me" (Mt 25/40). Finally, his suffering, death and resurrection is the supreme proclamation of the value of the human person. In this sense, Jesus Christ, the "Word of Life", is the very gospel of life (29).

The first task of every person in this regard today is to see in the face of every other person the imprint of God's image and likeness and to respect him/her irrespective of age, gender, race, health, wealth or any other consideration. A person has not only a human genealogy deriving from parents, but also a divine genealogy deriving from the Creator. Both

of them come into play at the very origin of the individual. As EV says "the geneology of the person is inscribed in the very biology of generation" (43).

However, the growing trend is to destroy life, especially the life of the unborn, merely for reasons of convenience. Worse still is the concerted effort people and groups are making in order to get abortion declared as a basic right of every woman as was seen at Cairo and Beijing. This is quite different from abortions felt constrained to have by a serious crisis like rape-pregnancy or something similar. To keep away from abortion in such a critical situation will not be easy for all; it may sometimes require heroism that may not be expected of all. But making abortion a fundamental right and free for all would be the height of permissiveness and irresponsibility.

Some may retort that "biology is not destiny". Surely, biology does not and should not decide the destiny of a woman (or of any person) though we cannot simply ignore it. However, more pertinent here is the question whether we human beings can shape our destiny without regard for fidelity, trust, fairness, love and care, without which there is no humanity. It is precisely these values which are endangered today by strong currents of consumerism and pragmatism where the only covetable goal in life is material well-being. It is this materialistic-hedonistic view and way of life that needs to be primarily challenged and resisted in order to arrest the forward march of the "culture of death".

Capital punishment

The catholic moral tradition understands the commandment "Do not kill" as forbidding the direct killing of the innocent. It therefore rightly holds that the exercise of the right to self-defense is not a violation of the commandment even if it happens to cause the death of the aggressor. The tradition considers such death only as the side effect of an act of self-defense and hence justified. Besides, the aggressor is not an innocent person. This teaching naturally is maintained also in EV (55). The tradition has also held the right of the public authority (i. e. the state) to execute a criminal who has perpetrated a serious crime like murder. The state's authority to do so is based on its duty to

protect the well-being of the state and its members. Here the killing executed by the state is direct.

Regarding this approved practice of capital punishment, EV raises a point. "On this matter there is a growing tendency, both in the church and in civil society, to demand that it be applied in a very limited way or even that it be abolished completely" (56). The encyclical is very sympathetic to this contemporary trend to a rigorous restriction and if possible, the complete abolition of capital punishment. The basic reason for this is again the dignity of the human person. Even a criminal's life is valuable; that life also is a continuous gift of God; it also, as the life of a human person, is worthy of everyone's respect. Besides, by executing the culprit we do not regain the value (eg. another life) already destroyed by his criminal act. The story of Cain as in Gen: 4:14-15 is a case in point. This does not deny the need of other punishments, without violating the basic value of human life and without denying the culprit a better opportunity for conversion and correction. This point made by EV is quite in tune with today's enhanced awareness of the dignity of the human person.

The status of the fetus

While speaking about the morality of abortion, the question 'when does the embryo become a personal individual?' is an important one. Despite the advances made in biology and genetics as well as the earnest attempts of philosophers and theologians, this age-old question is not answered with certainty even today. All seem to agree that the zygote, formed as a result of fertilization and possessing the diploid set of 46 chromosomes, has its genetic identity, distinct from those of the parents and siblings (except identical twins). However, at this early stage (i. e. roughly the first two weeks before implantation) the cells multiply by mitotic division without restriction or differentiation. Therefore at this stage each cell of this growing organism is capable of developing into a separate individual (totipotency). The zygote can also split into twins and even recombine. Hence many scholars hold that the embryo (pre-embryo) has not yet attained its individual identity though it has got its genetic identity. Individual identity is said to be attained when the possibilities for totipotency, twinning etc., are over. At the same time there

are others who think that individual identity is attained together with genetic identity. In this context, EV says that modern genetic science offers clear confirmation and "has demonstrated that from the first instant there is established the programme of what this living being will be: a person, this individual person with his characteristic traits already well determined" (60). This means that the identity of this new life as a unique individual or a particular person is clearly established at the moment of fertilization. In a situation of scientific uncertainty and dispute such a statement fails to convince many. Besides, such a position leads to a sort of genetic reductionism, that is, equating the individuality of a person with his/her genetic structure alone. This raises further problems. Acting according to genetic instruction is basically to act according to biology, that is, selfishly. But does not the person transcend biological nature and act beyond biology?¹

Does this mean that the pre-embryo can be aborted in the first two weeks of its existence because then its individuality-status is not certain? No. Abortion from the first moment of conception is immoral, not because the status of the fetus as an individual is established beyond doubt, but because we are uncertain about it at the present state of our knowledge. In a situation of unresolvable uncertainty (doubt), moral uprightness demands us to stand for the basic value of life involved here, and not to directly attack it. The encyclical quite rightly stresses this point later when it says that "...from the standpoint of moral obligation, the mere probability that a human person is involved would suffice to justify an absolutely clear prohibition of any intervention aimed at killing a human embryo...over and above all scientific debates and those philosophical affirmations to which the Magisterium has not expressly committed itself" (60). Instead of this, claiming to establish the individuality-status of the pre-embryo through scientific data might serve only to diminish the weight of the central teaching.

Democracy and morality

The encyclical strongly and rightly contends that any state or government has to respect basic moral values. Referring to the contemporary tendency to justify the making of

1 Cfr. Shannon T. A. "Cloning, uniqueness and individuality" in *Louvain Studies*, 19/4 pp. 283-306.

immoral and highly controversial laws in the name of democracy and majority vote EV says "Democracy cannot be idolized to the point of making it a substitute for morality or a panacea for immorality. Fundamentally, democracy is a 'system' and as such is a means and not an end...But the value of democracy stands or falls with the values which it embodies and promotes". (70) The Church has the right and, when required, the duty to expound and explain her moral teaching to the faithful and to others who would listen to her. She is also within her competence when she assesses the laws made by states and give guidance to the faithful. However, when an encyclical which is addressed also to "all people of good will" and expected to be read by people living in today's pluralistic societies, repeatedly indicts democracy and majority rule because of certain antilife laws many democratic states have made or tend to make, it is likely to cause surprise and disbelief in many people. Democracy is not the only form of government nor majority rule its inevitable norm. But still, these two seem to suit human dignity and aspirations better than other familiar forms of government. However, even such an acceptable system like democracy, when operated by limited and sinful human beings can go wrong. Such flaws are to be reckoned with. By that alone democracy and democratic procedures do not lose their validity and relevance. Such flaws or even worse ones occur in other forms of government as, for example, the abortion laws reported to be enforced in China.

Besides, the antilife laws made by democratic governments are not "prescriptive laws". Nobody is obliged to do such acts under these laws. What is to be done in such situations is to conscientize people, especially the faithful, about the evil of antilife practices and to motivate them against such practices rather than finding fault with the democratic system or mobilizing people to fight against democratic procedure. By this we are not approving the passing of such laws, but only tolerating their existence as a lesser evil as long as people enjoy the freedom to follow their conscience and not to obey those laws. EV itself takes such a position of lesser evil (73).

The penalty of excommunication

The canonical disciplines of both the Latin (CIC 1398) and the Oriental (CCEO 1450/2) churches attach the penalty of excommunication to the crime of abortion. By attaching such a penalty

the "church makes it clear that abortion is a most serious and dangerous crime" and wants to persuade the sinner to prompt repentance and conversion (62). However, excommunication is a serious spiritual punishment by which the believer is cut off from the communion of the church and deprived of benefits until the person truly repents and seeks absolution. The church therefore imposes this penalty only cautiously.

According to the provisions of canon law the following categories of persons do not incur excommunication even if they happen to commit abortion²; those who have not completed 16 years of age (according to Latin Code) while according to the Oriental those who have not completed 14 years of age. Again, those who commit abortion but are inculpably ignorant that the penalty of excommunication is attached to it also do not incur the penalty. In fact there seem to be very many people who are blissfully ignorant that the penalty of excommunication is attached to abortion. They also would not incur the penalty upon committing abortion. Another category of people who will not be liable to this punishment are those who happen to commit abortion under grave threat or force so much so that their freedom in acting was seriously impaired.

In this context, EV reminds us that it is not only the principal agents (eg. the woman who seeks abortion and gets it done) who incur the penalty, but also those who effectively contribute to the perpetration of the crime. For example, a relative who persuades a reluctant woman to commit abortion, the doctor who performs abortion, an assistant whose close collaboration was necessary to complete the procedure, etc., are all liable to penalty. However, the penalty may not be extended to those forms of cooperation which do not effectively contribute to abortion though may be associated with it. For example, a nurse who takes care of a woman who has undergone an abortion; someone who counsels a woman suffering from post-abortion syndrome; a nurse or medical aide who goes about with her routine care and duties (like cleaning surgical instruments, wheeling patients to the treatment room, dispensing medicines, etc.), among the beneficiaries of which there may be also abortion cases. What these people do are not evil actions, but often good actions or indifferent ones and they are not done with the intention of promoting abortion. Many catholic nurses and medical aides working in public/government hospitals and health centres may be cooperating only in this manner. If so, such actions also would not attract the penalty. However, as the encyclical warns, such people should try their best to avoid scandal and to see that their own opposition to abortion is not weakened through association with such cases and situations (64).

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